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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999 ISSUE #77
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plus

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Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLEPLAYING GAMES

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999
ISSUE #77

Cover
Stephen Daniele shows us the true face of evil in a climactic moment from "Ex Keraptis Cum Amore."

When you are a Bear of Very Little Brain, and you Think of Things, you sometimes find that a Thing which seemed very Thingish inside you is quite different when it gets out into the open and has other people looking at it.
— A. A. Milne, *Winnie the Pooh*

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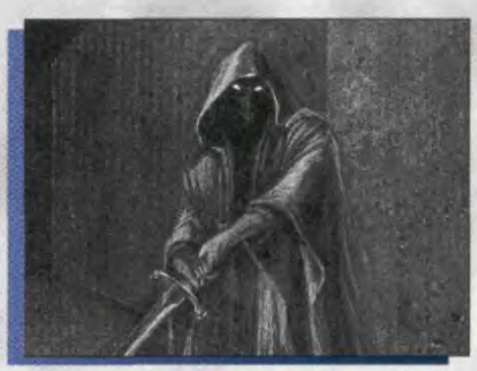


Editorial

Assigning an entire issue to one artist isn't something we do often. For one thing, it's hard to find an artist so versatile. It's even harder to find an artist who loves designing maps! Well, we found one. In addition to assigning him all of the maps and illustrations for this issue, we invited Stephen Daniele to share some thoughts on what makes his AD&D® experiences so memorable.

Worth a Thousand Words
(Guest Editorial)

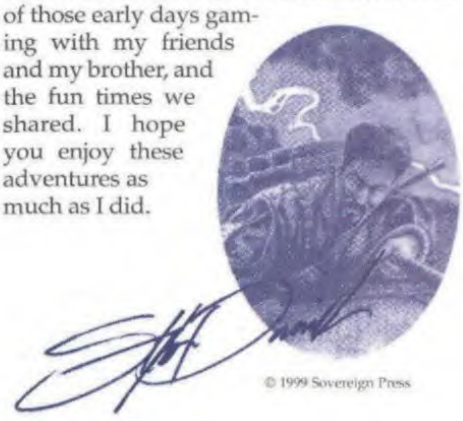
In the spring of 1980, I came home from middle school to find my friends sitting on the floor with my brother. They were playing that game we all know and love. "Know that thou art chaotic good, not evil!" boomed the mighty voice of Zeus, spoken by my little brother. "You and your companions must go to the Vast Swamp and find the Tomb of Horrors!" I didn't know much about the game, but it sounded pretty cool, so I joined in. We went to the Vast Swamp and died ... a lot. Thankfully, Zeus kept resurrecting us so that we could complete our mission. After an evening of adventure, we were hooked.

When I was ready to design my own adventure, I looked through my parents' collection of *National Geographic* magazines. "The Mysteries of Angkor" (appearing in the April 1982 issue) caught my eye. It was loaded with fantastic photographs of an ancient ruined city. I then sat down to write my first scenario, borrowing heavily from module I1, *Dwellers of the Forbidden City*. I soon discovered that nothing excites a group of roleplayers like the phrase, "This is what you see," accompanied by a striking visual aid. Visual aids and player handouts are doorways to the imagination. I had unlocked a secret to successful gaming: pictures! Nothing sets the scene or the mood better than a captivating visual.

Try using visual aids to open up your players' minds to the unfolding adventure. Libraries, travel brochures, subscriptions to *National Geographic*, bargain book sections of your favorite book store, used book stores—all of these are invaluable sources for inspiring visuals and maps. Check out the abundance of information on the web. Not only can you find picture "references," but the history and mythology of ancient cultures are loaded with the seeds of adventure. Years ago I started an evergrowing library of pictorial references. I don't just use them for art; I use them when I run games to add flavor and a sense of realism to the campaign. A lot of these books have maps of ancient cities, castles, and temples. A little time on a copy machine and some tweaking, and you have all the player handouts and maps that you need—including maps large enough for miniatures!

Illustrating an entire issue of *DUNGEON® Adventures* was an overwhelming and irresistible prospect. First, Larry and Chris approached me with a cover assignment and an adventure titled "Ex Keraptis Cum Amore" (*From Keraptis With Love*), Andy Miller's homage to *White Plume Mountain*. They wanted the adventure to include a "flip book" of player handouts and illustrations, reminiscent of early TSR adventures like *Tomb of Horrors*. I was so excited about the project that I offered to illustrate the whole magazine.

The adventures in this issue remind me of those early days gaming with my friends and my brother, and the fun times we shared. I hope you enjoy these adventures as much as I did.



Fans of Stephen's work are invited to check out his website at **www.stephendaniele.com**.

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Letters

Let us know what you think of the adventures in this issue! Write to "Letters," DUNGEON® Adventures, 1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Renton, WA 98055. You can also email us at **dungeon@wizards.com**. *Please send subscription questions and change of address notices to DUNGEON Adventures, Subscriptions, P.O. Box 469106, Escondido, CA 92046-9106. Email:* **dungeon@pcspublink.com**. *Toll free number: 1-800-395-7760.*

Praise for "Forgotten Man"

I have been a subscriber to *DUNGEON Adventures* for a long time, but I have never had enough incentive to write in—until now. "The Forgotten Man" (in Issue #75) is one of the most original modules I've ever read. The story is epic without the heroes having to battle the battalions of the Hell. The premise is reminiscent of all the fantasy greats, where the triumph of good over evil is not won by the sword, but rather by the heart. The design of Castle Ulmade is phenomenal, with unique architecture to fit the adventure's theme. The cartography fits in beautifully, with an almost surreal feel to the graphics. Kudos to Mr. Devaney for a job well done. May we see more of him in the future.

I would also like to mention Charles C. Reed's excellent work, "Non-Prophet Organization" (also in Issue #75). The story that the PCs are dropped into makes for a challenging mystery, and Mr. Reed even spelled out some of the many possible paths that the adventure might take.

While I have you here, I will also comment on some other topics. First, I would like to comment on the "series" issue. While I enjoyed the Mere of Dead Men series as much as any other adventures in your magazine, I was disappointed. I was expecting for them to act like a sequential set, where things learned in one adventure would help out in the next, and the stories were intertwined. The *rings of Myrkul* barely fulfilled this function, and the stories were completely unrelated, apart from the "evil in the swamp" issue. I understand that each adventure needs to stand alone, but this can be accounted for with some initial introduction material for the players (perhaps by, for example, Sir Justin). I would not recommend another series like the Mere, unless the stories were a more complete set.

Similarly, I think that the premise of starting a series of adventures in a tavern is a bad idea. First of all, it is one thing that you (the editors) hate to see! Second, most adventures can be easily modified (and I mean easily) to start in a tavern if the DM so desires. While developing a tavern or town on its own might be a good idea, I cannot see it taking place in more than one adventure.

Now, I understand that you probably get a lot of mail from people who want all generic adventures or people who want specific types. I, for one, am sick of reading these letters! Perhaps you could just give us the score ("This month, 85 letters for specific adventures, 60 against!"). By the way, my take is that any DM who cannot make an adventure fit into his campaign isn't worth his weight in salt. I have been running the STAR FRONTIERS® game for the past several years, and most of my source material comes from *DUNGEON Adventures*—it is easy to convert between monsters and aliens, magic and technology. Granted, it takes a little creativity.

One last point concerning the debate between six or twelve issues per year: I think twelve would detract from the quality. Already I find (very few) adventures that are somewhat lacking and would not like to see this periodical take a step down in quality. I like Ron Newsome's idea ("Letters" in Issue #76)

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about a special seventh issue. It could be used to present a series (like The Mere of Dead Men without the ten month wait), or to display adventures set in a specific location (e.g., arctic adventures). I would suggest that this issue be included in the subscription and not have to be purchased separately.

John Marciante
Rio Rancho, NM

The response to "The Forgotten Man" has been overwhelmingly positive—not bad for an adventure that passed between three editors and took nearly three years to see print!

Steve's adventure contains many of the elements we look for in submissions: a striking and lavishly detailed location, memorable NPCs with intriguing motives, and cleverly constructed encounters that flow together perfectly.

Readers have mixed feelings about a series of adventures based around an inn, and we are considering other options. Let us know what types of serial adventures interest you.

Although there are no current plans to produce a seventh issue (we have neither the budget nor the manpower to mount such an endeavor at this time), we do have some pleasant surprises planned for future issues, so stay tuned!

One Who Made It

I have noticed a lot of controversy lately in the "Letters" column suggesting that *Dungeon Adventures* accepts modules only from certain authors. As a freelance writer who recently had her first module accepted by the magazine, I feel I should comment on some of these concerns.

I have been a writer (that is, trying to make money at it) for seven years now, and I have lost count of the number of rejection letters I have received. Almost all of these letters are of the "Thanks, but no thanks" variety. If the story is not perfect or the editor simply doesn't have room, that's the response you typically get—a photocopied form letter that doesn't even have your name on it. Even if they wanted to comment, editors simply don't have the time to explain why your particular story bounced. But *Dungeon Adventures* was another story.

Once I had received permission to submit my module (by sending an email proposal to dungeon@wizards.com), the editors worked with me to bring the module to publishable standards. They edited that module *five* times before they bought it. Each time I got it back in the mail, I groaned and muttered, "I'm not doing this again." But I always did. When I read over their changes, I knew they were right.

No other magazine edits a story to help an author get it right. (Well, maybe *Dragon® Magazine*. I haven't tried them yet!) If it's not right, they bounce it back. In that sense, the magazine is much more open to novices than anyone else.

I have some advice for folks wanting to write for *Dungeon Adventures*. Beyond the obvious suggestion of getting the guidelines, I recommend that you email Chris with your module idea. This email should be as interesting as you can make it. That's what gets your foot in the door.

Good luck, and look for my module in a future issue of the magazine!

DeAnna Ferguson
Snellville, GA

Half-orc Amazon-Jongleurs and Other Weirdness

Let me just start off with "Wow." After having been on a gaming hiatus for the last year or two, Issue #75 caught my eye and I decided to give it a look. I'm impressed.

Visually, the magazine is 100% improved (not that it wasn't already very good), and the sturdier cover could come in handy. (It makes me think of all those back issues I have somewhere sans cover after a game session or two ...) The scenarios seem longer, which is a plus. I always hated those little "Side Treks" encounters. The Nodwick cartoons are entertaining. Most importantly, though, are the strong stories present in each adventure.

The intriguing plotlines are what make each of the adventures useful to just about anyone. As an added plus, the adventures are inventive without grasping at straws just to be different (such as talking dogs or rabid half-orc Amazon-jongleurs) and traditional without being clichéd. "The Forgotten Man" contains many classic fantasy elements (Good vs. Evil, a ruined castle, foul liches, werewolves, and dark knights) with an unusual story, and it is one of the very best modules I've seen in a while, in your publication or elsewhere. The other adventures are quite good as well; while I might change a monster or encounter here and there, the premises are strong and interesting.

In closing, a few specific favorites were, of course, "The Forgotten Man" (the cartography was simply amazing, too) and Fridkin the hermit from "The Amulet and the Underdark." Fridkin bears a striking resemblance to a certain green-skinned Jedi master, in my mind. (Hrmm, yes, correct you are, thinking am I.)

Anyway, congratulations on the magazine. It surprised me and surpassed all of my expectations. If the next issue catches my eye (another Brom cover just might do the trick—*hint, hint*) and lives up to the last one, I just might have to subscribe (and find a gaming group)!

Amos Bridges
via email

We can do without the talking dogs, but if that's the weirdest thing to cross my desk in any given week, I'd consider myself lucky!

Deep Inn Thought

I just read through Issue #75 and noticed the comment about trying to create a series of adventures based around The Sleeping Dragon Inn. I then went back through the old issues and read some of the stuff I'd skipped over or forgotten.

I recently used some of the maps and information from the Greyhawk® accessory *The Adventure Begins* to design a tavern in the poor part of Greyhawk City. It can easily fit into Waterdeep, as I created an exact duplicate in Waterdeep as part of the plot. Anyway, the Greyhawk tavern is run by a man whose family has owned it for four generations. It's a two-story affair with a secret basement. The basement is currently being used by a band of rogues. There are some nifty tricks and traps in the rogues' lair, some of which were installed even before their arrival.

Anyway, to make a long story short, in my scenario I would have the rogues get sloppy and be followed, at which point the tavern owner is accused of collaborating with the rogues. The city decides to arrest him and demolish the

tavern in hopes of finding the rest of the rogues (and their hidden loot). However, some of the patrons do what they can to keep their favorite hang-out intact. The DM can slowly and cleverly incorporate the tavern into his current city campaign so that the PCs regard the tavern as one of their favorite hang-outs; that way they have a reason to help find the true secrets behind the rogues and the tavern itself.

JediLoco@aol.com

Ideas Page

Thank you for a great magazine! As a DM, I'm always searching for new or different adventures for my players. "Into the Nest of Vipers" (Issue #75) may begin my next campaign. I only have four issues of *DUNGEON Adventures*, but the AD&D® game is richer for having you around, and I plan to buy as many back issues as I can!

As far as non-AD&D adventures are concerned, I'd like to direct all readers to the words just under the DUNGEON logo: *Adventures For TSR Roleplaying Games*. They do not say, *Adventures For the AD&D Game*. I think the occasional non-AD&D adventure would be fine. Maps and ideas can be drawn from almost anywhere.

The entire "series issue" could backfire. If the series involves gods, monsters, or settings I don't use, I would be more reluctant to purchase it. How about "theme issues" instead (for example, an issue dedicated to underground or city-based adventures)? A "forest theme" issue could present adventures for the different campaign settings. I also like modules designed for generic settings because I have my own world (that I'm always molding and shaping). You might include sidebars telling DMs how to place a given adventure in more than one setting.

I'd also like to suggest an "Ideas" page where DMs can exchange general ideas and plots. No short adventures, just ideas. I ran one campaign where my players were in a world where magic was in remission, and the only religion proclaimed that sorcerous magic was evil. The PCs were "successful" in bringing back magic by proving that the magic was not evil. (Imagine the PCs healing naturally through half the campaign.) That was my best DMing experience yet, and the players loved it so much, they begged me not to finish!

Brett Sampson
Lowell, MA

Something to Offer

I just wanted to let everybody know how cool I think your magazine is. I have been playing RPGs for ten years now and the AD&D game for five years. I have always been a DM and have found every issue of your magazine to be helpful. Whether it's a new creature, magical item, or complete adventure, the publication has something significant to offer in every issue. I just started a new campaign, and things are going better than ever. I have used ideas from every issue that I own, and I have incorporated some of the older adventures into our new campaign.

I was thrilled to pick up Issue #75. After looking through it, I have changed many of my campaign ideas. I would also like to congratulate Steve Devaney for "The Forgotten Man." It's awesome.

Roger Bartels
via email

Too Much Vanilla

I enjoy the magazine, but I have to tell you that you guys are doing too good of a job publishing generic modules. They are beginning to seem a little too vanilla. Spice up the magazine with some campaign-specific modules.

I would love to see a series of extra-planar modules similar to the Mere of Dead Men series, but for higher levels (9th–13th).

James Alonso
Millbrae, CA

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VISITING TYLWYTH

BY SCOTT WALLEY

In the name of love

Artwork and Cartography by Stephen Daniele

Scott, an archaeologist working in the Ohio Valley, is setting off to New Zealand in January to marry his fiancée Tammie, to whom he dedicates this adventure. This is Scott's first contribution to the magazine.

"Visiting Tylwyth" is an AD&D® module for 2–6 1st-level PCs (6 levels maximum). One of the PCs should be an elf. This PC is referred to herein as "the elf PC." If more than one elf is available, the DM should choose one with the most light-hearted or eccentric personality. The adventure can be modified for a gnome or halfling PC, or as a one-on-one adventure. The adventure is not suitable for evil or bloodthirsty PCs.

The adventure can be used to kick off a new campaign. It begins deep in a sylvan forest. The players receive only a brief synopsis of the story so far. The DM may prefer to begin the adventure farther back in time, roleplaying the first meeting of the PCs, their journey to the forest, and perhaps a stay at the elf PC's clan prior to this adventure. The elf PC would then have a chance to interact with his family and friends.

Finally, the DM might want to link this adventure to "Faerie Wood" (Issue #73). It might be necessary to replace the spriggan villain in "Faerie Wood" with a weaker creature, however, as a spriggan easily outmatches 1st-level characters.

Adventure Background

Tylwyth the elf is regarded as a great woodcarver—perhaps the greatest ever. Woodcarving is his joy and obsession. So great is his skill that even his modest efforts are works of art. His most inspired creations have magical qualities that could normally be produced only by great wizards. Such skill is beyond the reach of adventurers and normal tradesmen, requiring centuries of dedication and a deep love for the craft.

Tylwyth is also a hermit, preferring to avoid the distractions of clan life. Centuries ago he established a home on the borders of Dymfedd, a part of the Anderida Forest so primeval that it is avoided even by the elves. In this remote place, Tylwyth pursues his craft, reshaping the area into a wondrous and magical parkland.

Deep in the heart of Dymfedd, in a dismal briar patch, Tylwyth's reputation reached the ears of an old witch named Agnes. Agnes was obsessed in her own way, having long ago eschewed the company of elves and humans to follow her passion for plant lore and herbalism. Unlike Tylwyth, however, Agnes is a true outcast, antisocial and spiteful toward her own kind. The inhabitants of the Anderida have all but forgotten her.

Upon hearing of Tylwyth, a sense of loneliness crept into Agnes' withered heart. She viewed Tylwyth as a kindred spirit. In a normal person, love and respect might have kindled, but Agnes was not capable of these sentiments. Instead, she resolved to possess Tylwyth and make him a willing thrall.

For the Dungeon Master

The adventure begins in the Anderida Forest, which is home to several small, rustic, and aloof elf clans. Each maintains its own customs and personality. Ancient feuds and alliances between clans are common. The elf PC is a member of Clan Teg and grew up in the Anderida Forest. Be prepared to answer any simple questions the elf PC player asks about the elf clans and the forest. Have some elven NPC names ready in advance. This will help when the player asks questions like "Who is the chief of my clan?"

Before the elf PC can embark on an adventuring career, he or she must partake in a rite of passage. This ritual marks the elf's attainment of maturity and clan membership. Any elf of Anderida who does not undergo the rite is assumed to have abandoned his or her clan and elvish heritage and is treated as an outcast thereafter. The DM is free to elaborate upon the details of the rite, but a prerequisite of the process is the handing down of sacred clan lore, which is normally done by the initiate's eldest uncle.

The adventure begins with the PCs' trek through the Anderida Forest on their way to visit Tylwyth, the elf PC's eldest uncle. The trek takes them into Dymfedd, a primeval and dangerous part of the forest. The elf PC must spend enough time with Tylwyth to learn the clan lore. Unfortunately, the PCs discover that Tylwyth is missing. They must piece together clues to discover his fate, then rescue him from the evil witch, Agnes. Once Tylwyth is returned to his abode, the elf PC can learn the clan lore while the rest of the PCs relax and enjoy the scenery.

Note: DMs wishing to run this adventure for parties without one or more elf PCs must concoct another reason for visiting the elven woodcarver. Two suggestions are given below:

- The PCs are confronted by a band of greedy satyrs. To ensure safe passage through the woods, the heroes must procure a sculpture from Tylwyth the woodcarver and give it to the satyrs as a gift.
- Clan Teg was expecting Tylwyth to attend a feast and present a small woodcarving to a newly married elf couple. He hasn't shown, and the elves are worried that something unfortunate might have happened to him.

The Adventure Begins

Read or paraphrase the following to the player of the elf PC:

> You have embarked on a journey to visit your Uncle Tylwyth. It is necessary that you learn from him the lore of your clan, Clan Teg. Only then can you undergo a sacred rite of passage and leave the forest to embark on a career of adventuring. You have seen Tylwyth only a few times on his rare visits to the Clanhome, and you remember a jolly and loving old uncle full of wild tales, well-supplied with toys and curios. Only once, when you were very young, did you ever visit Tylwyth's home. You vaguely recall a wonderful garden of magical sculptures, long fishing trips and boat rides on a crystal lake, and an endless supply of toys.

Read or paraphrase the following to the assembled players:

> You have left civilization behind. On all sides, giant oaks tower over you. The forest is beautiful but trackless. You would be thoroughly lost without the elf to guide you. You are here to accompany your elvish companion to the home of Tylwyth, a respected member of the clan and your friend's uncle. The elf must consult this uncle prior to some sort of ritual, without which your companion cannot accompany you on the path to adventure. The elf's uncle is supposedly an expert woodcarver and a hospitable fellow, and his wilderness homestead is said to be spectacular. If this homestead is as the elf describes, you can look forward to some pleasant rest and relaxation at the end of the trail.

The elf PC guides the party unerringly to Tylwyth's abode, following a carefully hidden trail and secret markings well known to members of Clan Teg. PCs who wander off into the Anderida Forest without a native guide become hopelessly lost within minutes. This is a magical effect placed by the elves to discourage unwanted visitors, affecting even rangers and druids. PCs with the Tracking proficiency can follow the secret markers for 24 hours if they make a successful proficiency check at a –2 penalty. The check must be repeated each day. The DM should use the "Wandering Monsters" table (next page) to check for random encounters during the course of the PCs' journey.

Impish Carvings (Area A)

As the PCs enter Dymfedd, describe the forest as ominous and overgrown. The trees are ancient and gnarled. Dymfedd is wet and rocky, and the trees drip with moss. Fallen timber and rocks are cloaked in slippery lichen. As the PCs near Tylwyth's home, they have two preset encounters. Read or paraphrase the following to the players when the PCs reach area **A** on the map.

> An ocean of vegetation surrounds you as you hike along a game trail that follows a gurgling brook. Suddenly, it feels like you're being watched. Straining your eyes, you discern a nut-brown, beady-eyed face peering at you from behind a tree about 30 feet ahead and to your right.

The face does not respond to any attempts to communicate, but its eyes seem to follow the PCs. When the PCs

Wandering Monsters

Encounters occur on a roll of 1 on 1d8, rolled twice per day in the Anderida Forest and three times per day in Dymfedd. Evil monsters are not encountered in the area protected by Tylwyth's sculptures. If the party is small, modify the encounters as required.

Anderida Forest		Dymfedd	
Roll 1d12		Roll 1d12	
1	Unicorn	1	Ravens, huge
2	Sprites	2	Owl, giant
3	Stag, giant	3	Kobolds
4	Bear, brown	4	Spiders, large
5	Badger	5	Snake, poisonous
6	Boar, wild	6	Boars, wild
7	Stag	7	Stag
8	Wolves	8	Wolves
9	Elves	9	Ogre
10	Owl, giant	10	Cat, giant lynx
11	Cooshee	11	Badger
12	Swanmay	12	Nymph

Badger: AC 4; MV 6, burrow 3; HD 1+2; hp 6; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1–2/1–2/1–3; SZ S; ML 8; INT semi (4); AL N; XP 35; *MM*/241.

Bear, brown: AC 6; MV 12; HD 5+5; hp 31; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1–6/1–6/1–8; SA hug; SZ L; ML 8; INT semi (3); AL N; XP 420; *MM*/17.

Boar, wild: AC 7; MV 15; HD 3+3; hp 16; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 3–12 (boar); SD fights until reduced to –7 hp; SZ S; ML 10; INT semi (2); AL N; XP 175; *MM*/241. This brute is easily frightened by fire and suffers a –3 penalty to Morale checks when attacked with open flame.

Cat, giant lynx: AC 6; MV 12; HD 2+2; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1–2/1–2/1–2; SA rear claws 1–3/1–3; SD surprise; SZ M; ML 270; INT very (11); AL N; XP 270; *MM*/36 (cat, great). Giant lynxes are nocturnal creatures. Although lynxes almost never attack humans, this specimen might try to make off with a familiar or a halfling.

Cat, wild: AC 5; MV 7; HD 1; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 3; Dmg 1–2/1–2/1–2; SA rear claws 1–2/1–2; SZ S; ML 7; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 15; *MM*/38 (cat). This cat attacks small pets or familiars if it surprises the party.

Cooshee (1–8): AC 5; MV 15, sprint 21; HD 3+3; hp 17 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+6; SA overbearing; SD camouflage; SZ M; ML 12; INT semi (4); AL N; XP 270; *MM*/241. These elven dogs generally protect the boundaries of clan territories. There is a 75% chance that these cooshee are attached to a particular clan. If they menace the PCs, the PCs should be able to escape simply by going in the opposite direction.

Elves (2–12): AC 5; MV 12; HD 1+1; hp 6 each; THAC0 19; #AT by weapon; Dmg by weapon; SA +1 to hit with bow or sword; SD surprise, 90% *sleep* and *charm* resistance; SZ M; ML 13; INT high (14); AL CG; XP 420; *MM*/108. These elves are from another clan and are not necessarily friendly to the PCs. Nonetheless, even hostile elves are chaotic good and have a high regard for life. Hostile NPC elves try to capture the PCs and hold them for ransom or humiliation. If the PCs kill NPC elves, there are far-reaching consequences for the PCs and Clan Teg.

Kobolds (2–8): AC 7; MV 6; HD ½; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1–4; SZ S; ML 8; INT average (8); AL LE; XP 7; *MM*/214. These kobolds are lost. Their journey has been difficult, and they try to evade the PCs. If interrogated, the kobolds tell a tale of the woes they have endured during their journeys. They are unaware that some of their former comrades now serve the witch Agnes, who lives deep in Dymfedd.

Nymph: AC 9; MV 12; HD 3; hp 12; THAC0 17; #AT 0; SA spells, blindness; SD *dimension door*; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 7; INT exceptional (15); AL N(G); XP 1,400; *MM*/270.

Ogre: AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 15; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+2; SZ L; ML 11; INT low (5); AL CE; XP 175; *MM*/272.

Owl, giant: AC 6; MV 3, fly 18 (E); HD 4; hp 19; #AT 3; Dmg 2–8/2–8/2–5; SA surprise; SZ M; ML 11; INT very (11); AL N; XP 270; *MM*/27. The owl does not attack the PCs. If the PCs attack the owl, good denizens of the forest are outraged and send 2–5 giant owls to attack the PCs on a later night.

Raven, huge (2–8): AC 6; MV 1, fly 27; HD 1–1; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1–2; SA eye peck; SD not surprised; SZ M; ML 11; INT semi (3); AL N(E); XP 35; *MM*/27.

Snake, poisonous: AC 6; MV 15; HD 2+1; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison; SZ S; ML 8; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 175; *MM*/320. This snake strikes a PC from the underbrush, or the PC finds the snake in a backpack or bedroll. Saves against its poison receive a +3 bonus. If the saving throw fails, the effects are felt in 1–4 turns, incapacitating the PC for 2–8 days.

Spiders, large (2–8): AC 8; MV 6, web 15; HD 1+1; hp 4 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison SZ S; ML 7; INT non (0); AL N; XP 175; *MM*/326. These spiders are web builders. If they surprise the party, one or more PCs blunder into webs. If the spiders do not surprise the party, the PCs notice the webs and can easily avoid the encounter.

Sprites (1–6): AC 6; MV 9, fly 18 (B); HD 1; hp 4 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1–4 (sword) or 1–3 (arrow); SA sleep poison; SD invisibility; SZ S; ML 11; INT very (12); AL N(G); XP 420; *MM*/328.

Stag: AC 7; MV 24; HD 3; hp 9; THAC0 17; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1–3/1–3 or 2–8; SZ M; ML 7; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 65; *MM*/241.

Stag, giant: AC 7; MV 21; HD 5; hp 18; THAC0 15; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1–4/1–4 or 4–16; SZ L; ML 7; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 175; *MM*/241 (variant). Hunting giant stag is considered high sport among the elves, for the stags are cunning prey. However, elves and other good forest creatures do not tolerate the slaughter of animals with overwhelming force or magical spells.

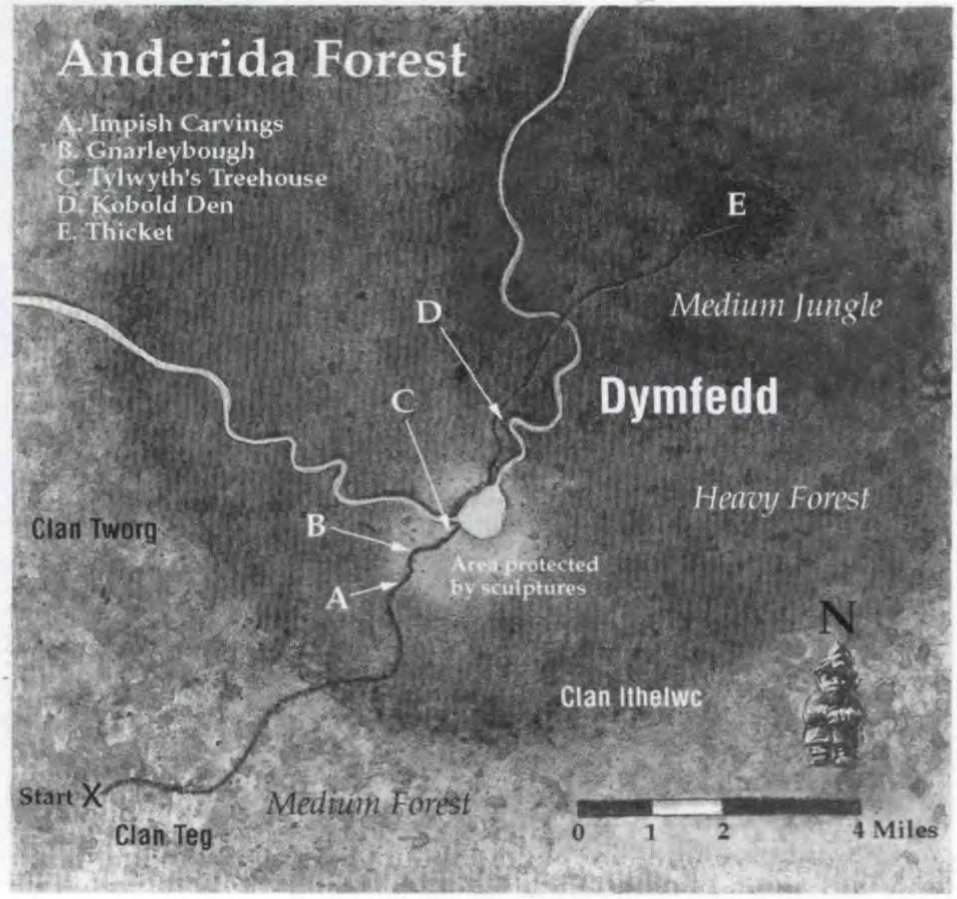
Swanmay: AC 7; MV 3 or 15, fly 19 (D); HD 5; hp 28; THAC0 15; #AT 2 or 3; Dmg 1–8/1–4 (as ranger) or 1/1/1–2 (as swan); SD +1 or better weapons to hit in swan form; MR 10%; SZ M; ML 15; INT high (13); AL CG; XP 1,400; *MM*/334. Kythea the swanmay is encountered in swan form with 2–16 swans (1+2 HD). She might keep track of the PCs with occasional flyovers. In ranger form, she fights with a longsword and dagger (5th-level human ranger; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 17). She does not follow the PCs into Tylwyth's domain.

Unicorn: AC 2; MV 24; HD 4+4; hp 24; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1–6/1–6/1–12; SA charge; SD sense enemies, *teleport*, spell immunities; SZ L; ML 14; INT average (9); AL CG; XP 650; *MM*/353. Unicorns impose a –6 penalty to their opponents' surprise rolls. If this unicorn surprises the PCs, it follows them undetected. It moves against the PCs if they behave maliciously. If the PCs respect the forest, the unicorn might defend them against monsters. The unicorn does not enter Tylwyth's land and flees if it does not surprise the PCs.

Wolves (2–12): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 10 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2–5; SZ S; ML 10; INT semi (4); AL N; XP 65; *MM*/362. These wolves are 75% likely to taunt the PCs by stalking them and howling. If the PCs are severely wounded, or if a PC is alone, the taunting might become aggressive. Even then, check the wolves' morale as often as the rules allow.

approach the face and examine it, they see that it is a lifelike gnome face carved from a burl on the side of the tree.

Once the PCs have had a laugh and continue to proceed, they notice more carvings scattered through the forest. There are lifelike animals, faces that leer from within hollow trees, and impish figures that gaze up from the brush at the PCs' feet. Most disconcerting of all, PCs glimpse furtive, lurking shapes from the corners of their eyes, but see nothing on closer examination. Evil PCs or PCs with harmful intent become increasingly panicked as they proceed. Such PCs must make a successful Wisdom check each hour they remain in Dymfedd, with a −1 cumulative modifier. Failure means they run aimlessly into the forest and become hopelessly lost. PCs who have been demoralized in this fashion flee from any encounter until they escape from Dymfedd. Under direct examination, these sculptures appear as nothing more than grotesquely shaped limbs and burls, but the subconscious mind perceives them as watchful, menacing creatures. Even evil-minded PCs who are aware of this ploy are subject to the subconscious panicking effect.



Gnarleybough (Area B)

When the PCs reach encounter area **B**, read or paraphrase the following:

> Now that you're aware of Tylwyth's subtle sculptures, you see them everywhere. Finding them and pointing them out becomes a game, as does commenting on their grotesque quality. One crude sculpture—a gigantic, twisted face in a tree trunk—appears to take exception to this rudeness. It opens its eyes as you pass by and booms, "*HOOO. HOOOOM. WHOOOOO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, BONE-BAG?*"

Gnarleybough (treant): AC 0; MV 12; HD 12; hp 56; THAC0 9; #AT 2; Dmg 4d6/4d6; SA animate trees; SD never surprised; ML 16; INT very (11); AL CG; XP 14,000; *MM*/346.

Gnarleybough is not really insulted. He is quite friendly unless the PCs harass him or maliciously deface "his" forest. Gnarleybough is friends with Tylwyth (who harvests wood responsibly) and had a visit from him just four days ago. Tylwyth was looking for a choice piece of hickory. But Gnarleybough is more interested in talking about forest events than he is about Tylwyth and constantly diverts the conversation to topics like the weather, bird migrations, soil conditions, how rude weeds are, and so forth.

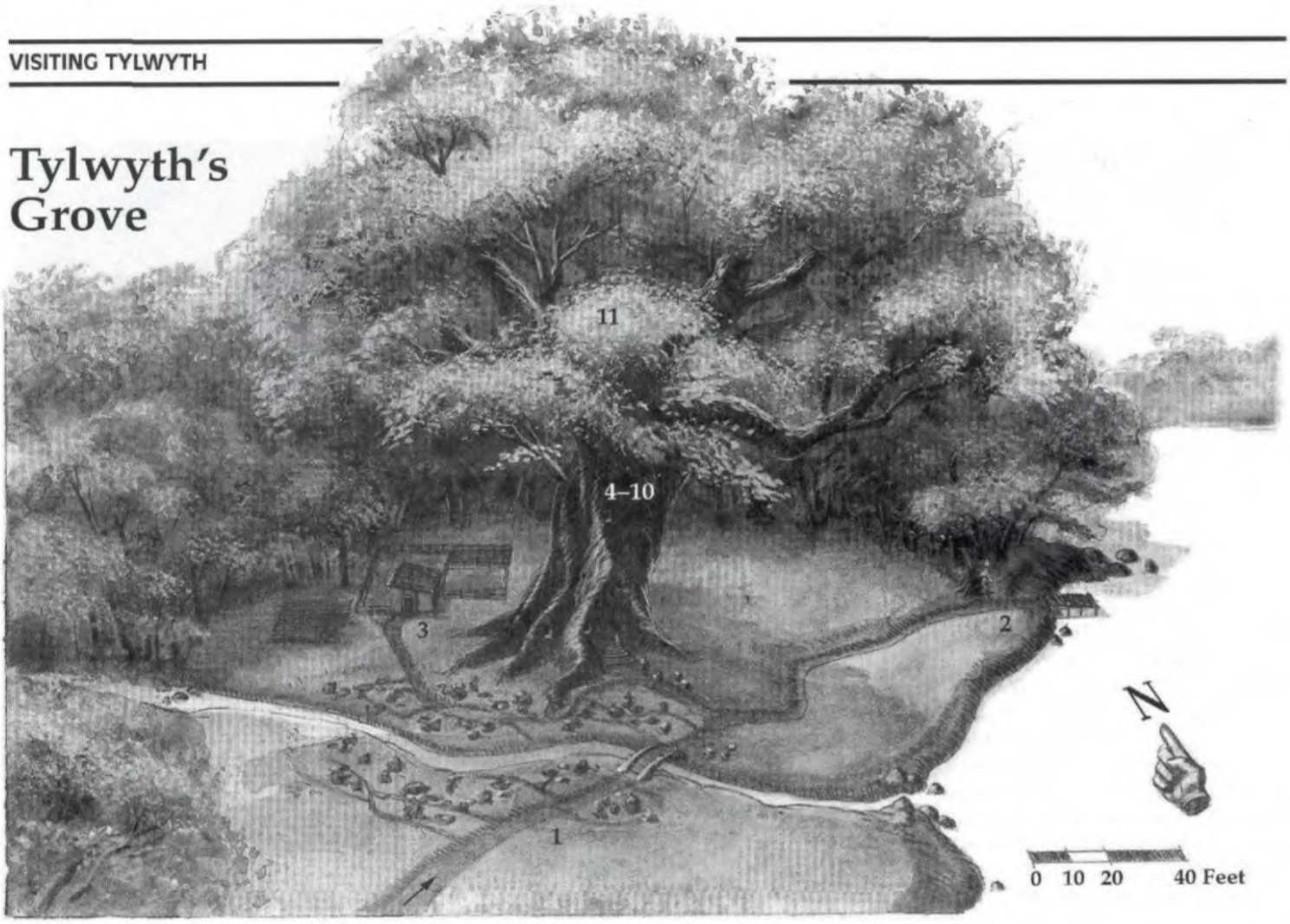
If the PCs suggest that Gnarleybough accompany them, the treant politely declines. A family of bluebirds has built a nest in his upper branches, and he dare not move lest he drop the little ones. He takes this responsibility very seriously. If Gnarleybough is attacked, he attempts to reason with the attackers for at least 1 round before animating trees to defend him. If his bluebirds are hurt, he will not rest until the offending individuals are destroyed. Otherwise, Gnarleybough is happy to assist the PCs with advice or general knowledge about the forest. He does not, however, know anything about Tylwyth's disappearance. If the PCs are stymied by the search for Tylwyth and return to question Gnarleybough, it might occur to him to mention Agnes. Gnarleybough knows little about her, except that she is an evil witch living in a briar patch northeast of Tylwyth's grove.

Tylwyth's Grove (Area C)

Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs approach area **C**:

> Through the trees ahead, a wonderful vista unfolds: A gigantic, ancient oak on the banks of a lake spreads its branches over a fantastic sculpture garden. The oak has been made into an elven house. Windows pierce the trunk, while balconies and walkways decorate the upper branches. A shed nestled behind the tree houses goats and chickens. Entering the clearing, you see heroic statues, bizarre topiaries, lifelike animals and sylvan creatures, birdbaths, fountains, sundials,

Tylwyth's Grove



bridges, gazebos, wind chimes, and mobiles. Chickens wander around the garden, and ducks paddle along the edge of the lake.

The PCs should expect some sign of Tylwyth at this point, but they receive no response if they call for him. In fact, he is not here. The PCs are free to explore the homestead. A general search of the treehouse takes twelve man-hours. A thorough search requires several days and includes an examination of every object in every room.

If the PCs use divination spells, *detect magic* does not reveal quasi-magical items created by Tylwyth. The "magic" of these items is natural and intrinsic like the magical nature of a dragon or a unicorn, not the result of enchantment. *Detect invisibility*, however, is 50% likely to reveal a secret door or compartment each time it is cast in Tylwyth's home. The placement and contents of secret areas are left to the DM. Doors might lead to passages, closets, cellars, or vaults. Compartments might be empty or contain personal items. A few contain items with monetary value or magical properties. The items listed in the "Home at Last" section are all hidden in secret compartments.

There is practically no limit to the number of doors and compartments that the PCs can find at Tylwyth's, but the DM should not allow them to accumulate more than a few valuable items in this way. Note that all secret doors and compartments are so masterfully crafted that they cannot be found by normal searching, even by an elf.

1. Sculpture Garden. Tylwyth's yard is part art gallery, part junkyard, and part amusement park. As the PCs explore, the DM should take special effort to describe the wonders they encounter. Think not only of "high art" but also of lawn art and miniature golf courses. Most of the art is exquisitely beautiful: carved plants and animals, elven heroes and beautiful maidens, scenes from mythology, literature, and everyday life. But there is also whimsy: a cuddly giant hedgehog; lawn gnomes in garish clothing; a graceful, deerlike creature with spiral horns and purple spots. Most memorable are the automations: A drinking bird, hinged at the hip, rocks back and forth and occasionally dips its beak in a pool of water. A bagpipe player with a propeller beanie plays a doleful note when the wind turns his propeller. A waterwheel animates a sculpted treant, who angrily chases several lifelike beavers. PCs might step on pressure plates that cause all sorts of effects. Although the garden is very entertaining, there is no trace of Tylwyth here and no clues to be found.

2. Lake Front. A flock of ducks lives along the lakefront and cackles loudly when the PCs approach. A pier juts about 10 feet into the lake. Nearby, a shattered

trunk left behind by another ancient oak, long dead, has been roughly carved into a noble elven visage in a way that combines the natural majesty of the shattered trunk with a subtle impression of art. The mighty face stares serenely across the waters.

Several clues might be found along the lakefront. A PC making a successful Tracking proficiency check with a –2 penalty notices tracks in the mud made by bipedal creatures. Some are elf-sized, while some are gnome- or halfling-sized. They all appear to be at least two days old. (In truth, kobolds were here scouting Tylwyth's grove and grabbing ducks the night after they kidnapped Tylwyth. They were eventually scared away by the disconcerting effect Tylwyth's sculptures have on evil creatures.)

There is currently no trace of a boat. The player of the elf PC might remember that Tylwyth used to have a boat. If the player does not remember this, the DM should not mention boats unless someone specifically asks about one. This sparks the elf PC's memory. If someone in the party has the means to speak with animals, the ducks know that small humanoid creatures have infested the lake. The humanoids have killed several of the flock. The last time they saw Tylwyth, he was in his boat heading for the opposite side of the lake.

The elf face in the giant tree trunk is of no special significance; it is just an awesome work of art.

3. Animal Pens and Gardens. Tylwyth prefers to garden and keep animals rather than "waste time" hunting and gathering. He has goats, chickens, rabbits, and several pigs in his pens. PCs with farming backgrounds or the Animal Handling proficiency can tell that these animals have been neglected for several days. Note that rabbits are "burrowing mammals" and can speak with gnomes. They know that Tylwyth has disappeared and that something must be wrong because he never leaves them unattended for so long. They also know that something has been terrorizing the ducks since Tylwyth disappeared.

4. Main Room. The door to Tylwyth's main room is unlocked. The room resembles a cross between a museum and a pawn shop. There are plenty of beautiful, comfortable furnishings, all buried beneath carvings and works in progress. PCs can doff muddy boots in a cloakroom (area **4a**), which is relatively uncluttered. There is a 1-in-10 chance that the elf PC remembers that Tylwyth kept his fishing tackle in the cloakroom. If any player explicitly asks where tackle might be found, the chance rises to 1-in-2. The tackle is not here currently.

PCs in area **4** have a 1-in-8 chance per hour of having an "encounter." (See the "Treehouse Encounters" sidebar.) This chance is doubled if the PC is wearing bulky armor or equipment. Once the PCs have searched the room, they no longer have encounters unless they are wearing bulky armor or equipment.

The ceiling of this and the other rooms in Tylwyth's treehouse is 10 feet high. There is 10 feet of living wood separating each floor.

5. Kitchen. This kitchen is a mess. Kitchenware and woodworking tools are inextricably mingled. Foodstuffs sit adjacent to buckets of stain and varnish. All of the kitchenware has been crafted by Tylwyth, each spoon and saltshaker a work of art. In addition, Tylwyth has created mechanisms that provide running water, mix dough, shell eggs, catch mice, and so forth. The PCs might inadvertently start one of these mechanisms, which Tylwyth has made unnecessarily complex for entertainment purposes.

A general search reveals that the cauldron on the hearth to the north is filled with charred food. Tylwyth left a pot of stew bubbling on a bed of coals so that he would have a hot meal when he returned from fishing. (The bookas are reliable enough to keep "their" treehouse from burning down, but they are clueless when it comes to cooking. In fact, they have been forbidden to touch Tylwyth's food ever since an unpleasant incident involving soap and bean soup.)

6. Workroom. This room is even more cluttered than the main room. Most of the woodwork is unfinished, and much of the clutter consists of tools and raw materials. The same chance of an encounter applies here as in area **4**, but the results are more mundane: boards crashing to the floor, tools falling, and so forth.

Tylwyth keeps his collection of clocks here. Normally, they chime every hour,

Treehouse Encounters

Roll 1d8 and consult the table below:

1. The PC inadvertently knocks over a sculpture, with a 1-in-6 chance of ruining it.

2. The PC finds an intricate sculpture: a tower of intertwined pieces of wood. This is a game that Tylwyth invented, in which players take turns removing pieces of wood until the tower crashes. The PC investigates the game too roughly and it collapses, flinging pieces everywhere. This event happens once only. If it is rolled again, treat the result as a 3.

3. An intricate mechanism springs into action, scaring the daylights out of the PC. Such mechanisms include jack-in-the-boxes, music boxes, dancing marionettes, wooden cookie jars stuffed with spring-loaded toy mice, figurines that zip across the floor, and so forth.

4. A shelving unit comes down on the PC's head, inflicting 1–4 points of damage. This encounter happens once only. If it is rolled twice, treat the result as 3.

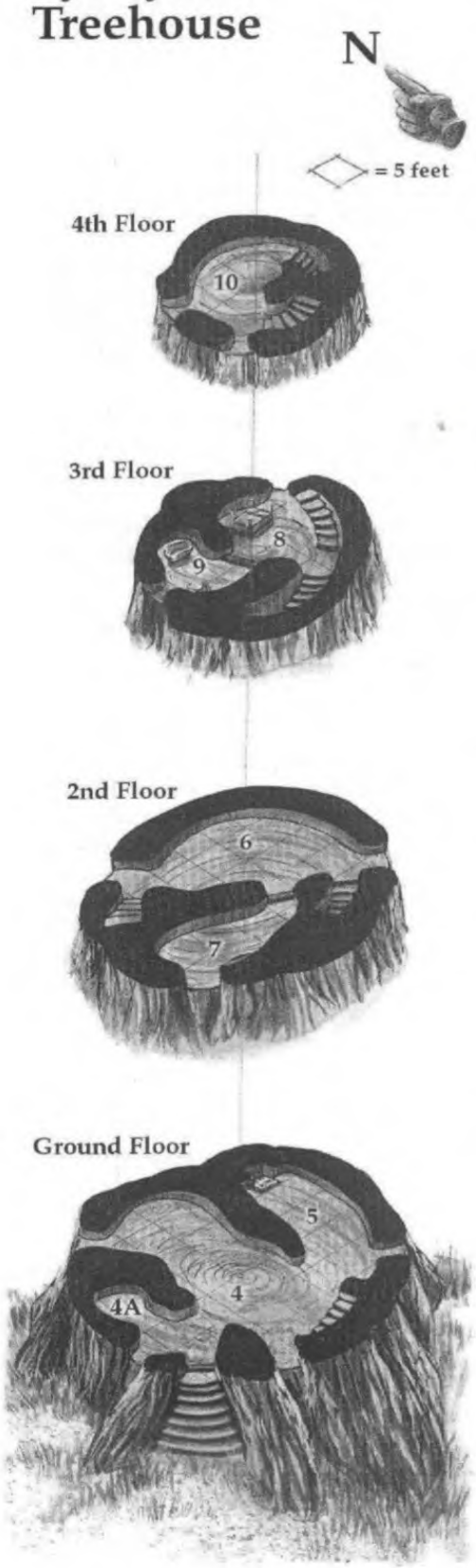
5. The PC spills a bucket of wood stain onto himself or another PC. Unless the PC immediately doffs his gear, he will create a mess everywhere he goes until the stain dries in 1–6 hours.

6. The PC becomes entangled in a complex mobile or wooden assembly. To escape without damaging the object requires at least an hour and the assistance of another PC.

7. The PC sees movement from the corner of his eye. (This is one of the bookas that inhabit Tylwyth's home.)

8. A drawer of tools drops on the PC's foot for 1–2 points of damage. Unless the foot is healed magically, the PC cannot walk on the foot for 24 hours and suffers a one-half movement rate penalty.

Tylwyth's Treehouse



but each of the clocks has wound down. A PC with academic training can deduce roughly how long Tylwyth has been gone by starting all the clocks and experimenting with them for several hours, then performing complex mathematical calculations. The PC must then make an Intelligence check with a –6 penalty to deduce that Tylwyth has been gone two to four days. PCs with the Engineering proficiency receive a +2 bonus to their Intelligence check.

7. Storage. Adjacent to the door are a mop, bucket, and shelves of cleaning supplies. Most of the room is filled with barrels, boxes, and bags of foodstuffs and household goods. Some of the supplies are not typical of an elven home. PCs might deduce that Tylwyth conducts commerce with individuals from outside the Anderida Forest. Indeed, he is rather famous among powerful wizards, who use his work in the creation of wooden magical items.

8. Tylwyth's Bedroom. This room contains an immense, intricately carved four-poster bed. Dressers and closets are built directly into the walls. The room is lavishly appointed, but everything is buried in knick-knacks, wood shavings, and blocks of half-carved wood. Dirty dishes and laundry are piled underneath Tylwyth's bed (one of his bad habits). Drawers contain personal items and clothing, but little of value.

9. Water Closet. This room is as lavish as the bedroom and contains a varnished wooden tub against the west wall, a flush toilet, and a toiletry cabinet. Thankfully, this room is clean and uncluttered. The grooming products clearly come from outside Anderida.

10. Attic. This is the most cluttered room in Tylwyth's treehouse. PCs with bulky armor or equipment can't even move here. Other PCs have double the normal chances of an encounter. (See "Treehouse Encounters" sidebar.)

Woodwork, supplies, and miscellany are stacked to the ceiling, leaving narrow winding aisles for passage. A search of this room reveals numerous oddities but no useful clues. Stairs spiral upward for about 30 feet before splitting into several narrow passages that lead to area **11**. Alternately, the DM may modify the layout of the treehouse to include additional floors, bumping the attic up to a higher position in the tree trunk. Note that four bookas (see "The Bookas," below) live in the attic, but they are very careful to avoid encounters here. Traces of booka habitation are present but are indistinguishable from Tylwyth's knick-knacks and the leavings of mice and squirrels.

11. Balconies and Walkways. These areas offer a beautiful view and quick movement among the treetops. The balconies are shaped from the living tree. Each bears comfortable furniture. Tylwyth comes to these balconies for inspiration, moonlit dinners, or nightcaps.

On a balcony facing the lake is a long tube attached to the balcony railing by a swivel. The end of the tube facing the lake is carved in the shape of an eagle's head with crystal eyes. If the players cannot deduce the purpose of this tube, allow each PC who examines it an Intelligence check at –4 to determine that the item is a telescope. PCs using this telescope to search the surrounding countryside have a 1-in-4 chance per hour of spotting Tylwyth's boat in a cove on the opposite side of the lake.

The Bookas

Tylwyth is not the only sentient being who calls this tree home. Four bookas named Pip, Spim, Fleeble, and Dreet live in the attic. The bookas believe the tree is theirs and consider Tylwyth a boarder. The bookas are initially afraid of the PCs and alternately avoid them and spy on them. Eventually, they realize that the PCs are well meaning and they become careless, leading to an encounter. The DM should decide when to play this encounter; the encounter most likely occurs when the PCs are in area **4**, **5**, or **6**. As the PCs debate a course of action, the DM should read or paraphrase the following to one PC (chosen randomly):

> While your compatriots discuss the situation, you are standing by a small end table covered with surreal sculptures. You place a hand on a sculpture

to take a load off your feet. As you do so, the wood squirms beneath your hand! A grotesque little man with a big nose and round, dark eyes looks up at you and squeaks, "My hair! My hair! Fleeble! He messed up my hair!" He flutters up to a ceiling beam on bright butterfly wings and begins to weep. His grief is gone in an instant as three more winged faeries appear.

One of the faeries grins at you and says, "Hello, big persons!"

Pip, **Spim**, **Fleeble**, and **Dreet** (bookas): AC 7; MV 12, fly 18 (A); HD ½; hp 3, 3, 1, 1; THAC0 20; #AT 0; Dmg 0; SD *invisibility*; MR 10%; SZ T; ML 9; INT very (12); AL CG; XP 35; *MC5*.

The bookas are fond of Tylwyth and in their own way are distraught that he has disappeared; however, these little faeries do not think or behave as mortal folk do, and dealing with them can be frustrating. The bookas possess an attention span of about 10 seconds, and they are easily distracted. They do not display strong emotions the way "big folk" do and seem to take everything lightly or with aloofness. Occasionally, they have passionate outbursts so melodramatic they seem feigned. They are, in many respects, like cats. As they "warm up" to the PCs, they may make themselves overly welcome. Pip tends to ask endless irrelevant questions, while Spim (the first booka encountered) is fascinated with clothing, equipment, and hair. Fleeble giggles constantly and loves riddles, while Dreet speaks only in rhymes and puns.

The bookas can be annoying, but they perform small chores for PCs they like. In fact, Tylwyth's home would be far sloppier if it weren't for the constant efforts of the bookas. If, for some reason, the PCs incur the wrath of the bookas, the wood sprites declare war. Their guerrilla attacks take the form of practical jokes or clever traps, depending on the severity of the PCs' behavior.

A patient party can learn from the bookas that Tylwyth went fishing one morning and never returned. He was to have been gone only a short time, to a little cove on the opposite side of the lake. He was eager to begin a new project upon his return, and the bookas know he would not voluntarily have stayed away this long.

The Search For Tylwyth

Eventually the PCs should search the lake's shoreline. The protective sculptures disappear toward the northern end of the lake, and the terrain becomes low and wet. Tall sycamores replace oak, and the undergrowth thickens. Fortunately, there is a path that completely encircles the lake. The PCs find Tylwyth's boat in a shallow (4' deep), weedy cove at the far end of the lake (near area **D**). The lake is fed by a sluggish stream, also 4 feet deep, flowing from the north. Examination of the boat reveals signs of a struggle and some bloodstains. There is a 1-in-8 chance during the day that PCs wading in the lake are attacked by 2–8 kobolds from area **D**, 1-in-4 if the event occurs at night. See "The Kobold Den" below for details on kobold tactics.

Several burrowing mammals (muskrats) live in the vicinity. If the PCs can speak with them, these critters gladly lead the party to the kobold burrows. Examination of the river banks may reveal small humanoid tracks (requires a Tracking proficiency check at a –4 penalty). The tracks lead to a steep overhanging cutbank several yards upstream. If the PCs examine this area, they can find the entrance to the kobold burrows as if it were a concealed door. Otherwise, the PCs' best bet is to lay in ambush and wait. Each night, the kobolds come out to forage for food.

The Kobold Den (Area D)

The entrance to the kobold lair (area **D** on the map) is a dank, earthen burrow hidden among the roots of a large sycamore tree. The powerful earthen odor of the tunnel is overwhelming. Dangling roots drape the entrance. A successful Tracking proficiency check reveals that the tunnel is used frequently. The entrance is about 2 feet in diameter and is 50% likely to cave in if widened. Medium-sized creatures can squeeze through the hole without widening it if they are wearing leather or lighter armor. Small-sized creatures can squeeze through in banded or lighter armor. Gnomes have their normal chance of detecting that this opening is unsafe and could potentially cave in.

Inside, the diameter of the tunnels widen to 3 feet. PCs who are 3' to 4.5' tall must stoop, moving at two-thirds their normal rate. PCs taller than 4.5 feet must crawl, moving at half speed and incurring a –4 combat penalty in addition to losing all Dexterity and shield bonuses. (Oversized PCs with the Close-quarter Fighting proficiency suffer no attack penalty with piercing weapons but still lose their Dexterity and shield adjustments.) It is impossible to use slashing, bludgeoning, or size L weapons in such close quarters.

Kobolds: AC 7; MV 6; HD ½; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1–4; SZ S; ML 10; INT average (10); AL LE; XP 15; *MM*/214; 1d4 darts, dagger, short rope, potion of *water breathing* (four doses). The rope is used as a garrote, lasso, or snare, or to grab PC limbs. A group of kobolds attacking to overbear gains a +2 bonus to its overall roll when armed with ropes. The kobolds fight with no penalty in close quarters.

12. Guard Post. A single kobold sits here, watching the entrance. PCs who spend several rounds examining the entrance, shine light inside, or dig at the opening alert this kobold, who retreats to area **13** and warns his fellows.

13. Kobold Lair. This is the main kobold den. The kobolds live like animals, almost piled on top of one another. Vary the number of kobolds so that they present a challenge to the PC party. Because the kobolds have several combat advantages, there should not be more than twice as many kobolds as there are adventurers unless the PCs have several well-armed warriors.

If alerted, the kobolds place a wicker gate over the opening to the den and pepper the lead PC with darts. Treat the gate as a stuck door, but PCs on their hands and knees suffer a –3 penalty to their Open Doors roll.

If the PCs press the attack, half of the remaining kobolds drink doses of their potions of *water breathing* and retreat from the burrows through area **14**. They approach the PCs from the rear and

Kobold Den

gauge the chance of a successful attack. If all of the PCs are inside the tunnels, the kobolds collapse the opening, sealing the entrance and possibly burying the rearmost PC. If a few PCs remain outside, the kobolds try to pull them into the river. (See below for tactics.) If the PC party looks indomitable, the kobolds rise from the water just long enough to lob occasional darts. If the kobolds still fighting in area **13** lose morale, they too imbibe their potions of *water breathing* and flee through area **14**.

If the PCs examine this cave, they discover several items clearly looted from Tylwyth: carving tools, a necklace of wooden beads (each shaped like a turtle), and a bait box. Examination of the kobolds reveals that several are wearing fishing tackle as jewelry. There is no trace of Tylwyth himself. If one or more of the kobolds are captured and interrogated, they reveal (in broken Common) that Tylwyth was taken to the lair of Agnes, a witch who lives in Dymfedd. The kobolds give false directions to Agnes' abode; if forced to accompany the PCs as guides, the kobolds grudgingly lead the PCs to Agnes' cottage and either betray them or flee at the first opportunity.

14. Escape Tunnel. The kobold's escape tunnel leads downward and exits underwater in the adjacent river. The kobolds use their potions of *water breathing* to escape this way. They also use *water breathing* to their advantage against the PCs, attempting to drown their victims by overbearing them in the water. The kobolds can perform this attack against any PC within 5 feet of the water's edge, which includes the entrance to their burrows. (See the *PH* for rules on swimming and holding one's breath and the *DMG* for rules on unarmed combat. The kobolds are proficient swimmers.)

Kobolds and PCs both suffer a –4 penalty to attack rolls and a +6 initiative penalty underwater. During the day, kobolds and PCs both can see only 10 feet in the murky water of the stream. At night, infravision allows the kobolds and possibly some PCs to see in a 10' radius.

If the PCs stay above the water, they suffer a –4 penalty to attack rolls against submerged kobolds and can see only 5 feet through the water. Use Table 55 in the *PH* to determine the initiative penalties for wading PCs.

Note that many of the PCs' weapons are probably useless in water, whereas the daggers and ropes of the kobolds remain effective, and PC armor is useless against overbearing attacks.

Sample combat: Five kobolds rise from the water behind a PC at the shoreline. The kobolds fail to surprise the PC (although the DM should assign a situational bonus for sneak attacks from underwater). The kobolds use ropes to overbear. Because they are using an unarmed combat technique against an armed PC, the PC automatically wins initiative and receives a +4 bonus to her attack and damage rolls. (If the PC had been surprised or was wading in the water, she would not gain this advantage, as the kobolds would attack with virtually no warning.) The PC misses. The kobolds surround the PC. The kobold behind the PC leads the attack, gaining a +2 rear attack bonus. His four assistants add another +4 to the attack, and their deft use of ropes adds another +2 modifier. The size difference (Size S vs. Size M) imposes a –4 penalty on the kobolds, so the final attack roll is at +4, but the PC's armor is useless against an overbearing attack. She's wearing platemail and has neither Dexterity bonuses nor magical protection, so she is only AC 10! The kobolds roll a 15 and easily succeed in pulling the PC into the river. The PC receives a saving throw vs. paralyzation to draw a deep breath before being pulled underwater.

The next round, the kobolds and the PC both have +6 penalties to initiative. The submerged PC draws a dagger and attacks at a –4 penalty, but manages to wound a kobold. The kobolds also incur an additional –4 attack penalty underwater, reducing their net bonus to +0. They roll a 12, successfully holding the PC underwater. One round of air is gone!

If the kobold's morale is broken after they have been routed from their burrow, they swim upstream until their *water breathing* ability runs out. They then retreat to area **E**. Wise use of the Tracking proficiency (such as scanning the riverbanks upstream) might allow PCs to follow the kobolds. Otherwise, they must capture and interrogate a kobold to discover Tylwyth's fate.

Into the Wilds

One way or another, the kobolds lead the PCs through increasingly wild terrain, overgrown with nettles and brambles and infested with mosquitoes. The path followed by the kobolds is little more than a game trail. Kobolds, gnomes, and halflings can move at full speed, but larger creatures move at half their normal rate. Off the game trail, all creatures move at half their normal rate, and running is impossible. Slashing, bludgeoning, and Size L weapons incur a –4 attack penalty. The DM should use the wandering monster table for Dymfedd. Note that the PCs can easily become lost if they leave the trail; refer to Table 81 in the *DMG*, and treat Dymfedd as a "Jungle."

The Witch's Thicket (Area E)

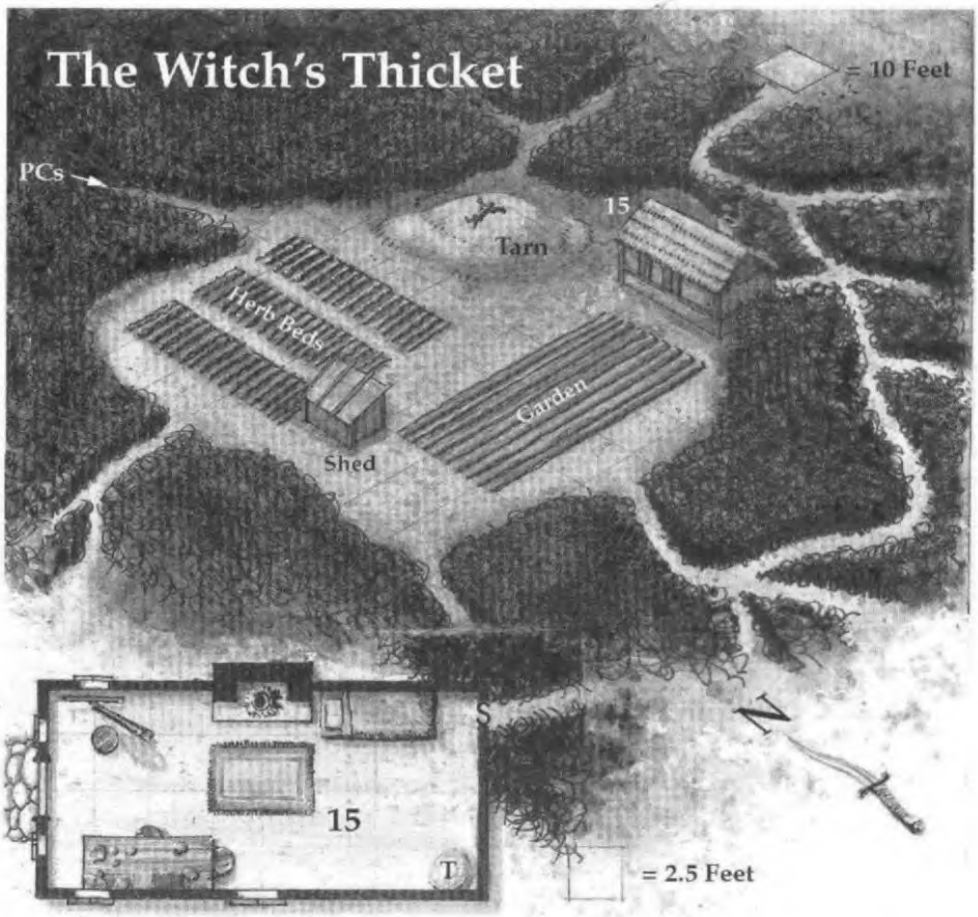
Agnes's thicket is dark and dismal. Stunted trees lift withered branches to the sky, and the undergrowth becomes even more impenetrable. Thorns and vines snag the PCs with every move. All creatures on the game trail are slowed to

one-third normal movement, and running is impossible. Movement off the path requires hacking through vegetation, which slows movement to 1. The vegetation is too wet to burn. Visibility through the thicket is only 10 feet.

If the PCs have a kobold prisoner, they do not get lost. If they are following tracks, they must make additional Tracking proficiency checks after each stop to avoid losing the trail. PCs following directions given to them earlier by a kobold automatically become lost, moving aimlessly down one branching path after another. The DM should determine what happens to PCs lost in the thicket. Eventually, though, they should be able to find some clue, such as a puff of chimney smoke, that leads them to Tylwyth.

Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs reach area **E**:

> The closeness of the thicket and the incessant mosquitoes are driving you mad. With each step, you are snagged by briars or entangled by tough, woody vines. The nightmarish terrain seems endless until, at last, you see a clearing ahead. In this clearing is a quaint peasant cottage with smoke issuing from its chimney.



Agnes is aware of the PCs thanks to her hawk familiar Falco, and she has deduced that they have come to rescue Tylwyth. She has prepared a fiendish trap for them. In the clearing is a small tarn from which Agnes draws her drinking water. Agnes has cast a *phantasmal force* over this tarn so that it appears to be solid ground. On this "surface," an illusory Uncle Tylwyth is staked out spread-eagle. Illusory, hungry-looking buzzards seem to be closing in on him.

If PCs rush to Tylwyth's defense, those in the forefront seem to vanish. In reality, they have plunged down into the 10' deep tarn, where several *water breathing* kobolds await them. There are four kobolds here plus any that escaped from the kobold den. See area **D** for statistics.

Once the characters are lured into the trap, Agnes stops concentrating on the *phantasmal force*. The cottage is soundly locked, barred, and shuttered, but Agnes has built well disguised slits into the walls through which she can cast spells.

If the PCs dallied in their search for Tylwyth, the DM may rule that he has already become the willing thrall of Agnes, which will change the way the adventure proceeds somewhat.

Agnes, half-elf female W5/C5: AC 10; MV 8; hp 21; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type or spell; SD suffers no side effects from potion miscibility; Str 10, Int 18, Wis 14, Dex 6, Con 13, Cha 16; ML 14; AL CE; XP 650; staff, dagger, five potions (*healing, invisibility, levitation, plant control, water breathing*), *wand of magic missiles* (10 charges).

Wizard spells (4/2/1): 1st—*hypnotism, jump, protection from good, spook*; 2nd—*blindness, summon swarm*; 3rd—*blink*.

Priest spells (5/3/1): 1st—*command, entangle* (×2), *faerie fire, pass without trace*; 2nd—*barkskin, obscurement, warp wood*; 3rd—*tree*.

Despite her level, Agnes' lifelong dedication to herbal lore has given her the ability to brew certain potions.

Agnes is very old and seeks to avoid a physical confrontation at all costs. The order in which she casts spells is left to the DM, but she always tries to have one spell or potion to help her escape in a pinch. She uses mind-affecting or disabling spells on heavily armored PCs and damaging spells on others. If she can identify a wizard, she casts *summon swarm* on him.

If she is physically confronted or if her morale breaks, Agnes attempts to flee. If she is still in sound physical condition, she may launch spell attacks at the PCs from the safety of the briars, using her potion of *plant control* to move about with impunity. If clearly outmatched, she flees into the thicket. Her familiar Falco is used to monitor the PCs; she does not use him to attack.

Falco (hawk familiar): AC 6; MV 1, fly 33 (B); HD 1; hp 6; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1–2/1–2/1; SA eye peck; SZ S; ML 9; AL N; XP 65; MM/27 (bird).

15. Witch's Cottage. Agnes' cottage has sturdy walls and a fire-resistant thatched roof. The single door and shuttered windows are quite strong. A secret door in the back of the building leads directly into the briars and a maze of trails. Agnes retreats this way, closing and spiking the secret door behind her. If the PCs are winning too easily, Agnes can have pet giant rats to guard her retreat.

The inside of the cottage is typical of rustic homesteads: A rickety wooden bed bears a mattress stuffed with bulrushes. A bubbling cauldron rests on the hearth. A spinning wheel is situated near the northwest window. Day-to-day tools and supplies cover the walls. Herbs and wild plants hang from the rafters, drying. Agnes uses these to brew her potions. Hidden behind these herbs, dangling like a cocoon in the southeast corner (at the point marked "**T**" on the map), is Tylwyth. He has been trussed to a ceiling beam with thick cords.

Tylwyth Rescued

Once Agnes is defeated, the PCs can release Uncle Tylwyth. Needless to say, he is overjoyed. His buoyant personality returns to the fore, and within minutes he's laughing about the whole event. If the PCs ask about his abduction, read or paraphrase the following:

> A big smile spreads across Tylwyth's face, and he shakes his head. "Tis the darnedest thing," he says with a laugh, "I was out fishing one morning when a whole passel of these dog-faced boys leaps up out of the water and tips my boat! I thought I was a goner! They had me half-drowned and beaten silly by the time they dragged me ashore. They tied me to a pole like a trophy boar and started carrying me off through the woods. I tried to tell 'em I was too old and stringy to make good eating, but they didn't pay no mind. They brought me here and threw me down in front of that old hag, Agnes. You see, she had taken a shine to me from afar!"
>
> He flexes his muscles, gives you a sly look, mutters "I still got it," then continues.
>
> "But she got all eerie when I told her I like women with teeth! She bundled me up like a sack of potatoes and hoisted me to the rafters! She was fixing up a pot of some love potion, I gather, to put a gleam in my eye. Good thing you showed up when you did!"

He turns to the elf PC, claps him on the shoulder, and says:

> "Never underestimate the Teg charm and good looks. 'Tis a terrible thing to have such a power over the opposite sex, and you can see what kind of shenanigans it leads to! Now let's get home. I left a kettle of stew on the hearth!"

Uncle Tylwyth (elf): AC 10; MV 12; HD 1+1; hp 4; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SD 90% resistance to *sleep* and *charm*; Str 8, Int 14, Wis 16, Dex 14, Con 6, Cha 13; ML 13; AL CG; XP 420 (for rescue only); unarmed.

A search of the cottage reveals normal peasant belongings and numerous herbs, remedies, and poultices. On a successful Herbalism proficiency check, an herbalist can identify 3–18 poultices and remedies (each adds a +4 noncumulative bonus to Healing proficiency rolls) and 2–8 ingestive poisons. Searching under the floorboards reveals a cache of leather flasks and wooden jugs containing 2–8 potions of *water breathing*, two potions of *healing*, a potion of *sweet water*, and a potion of *Murdock's insect ward* (*ToM*). Agnes' spellbooks are here, but they are so dirty and defaced with annotations that wizard PCs have half their normal chance of learning spells from these books. The books contain several recipes for potions. The DM should

decide how many recipes there are (Agnes kept most of her recipes in her head) and how decipherable they are. They are useful only to PCs of high enough level to brew potions. Agnes has no money, as there is no need for it in Dymfedd.

If the PCs cast *detect magic* and scan the cauldron, the contents radiate a very weak dweomer. If the PCs maintain the fire for 24 hours, the contents of the cauldron boil down to the equivalent of four *philtres of love*, which radiate a stronger, but still mild, magic. The magical aura diminishes, and the equivalent of one *philtre* is lost each additional 2-hour span that the cauldron is left on the fire.

Home At Last

The journey back to Tylwyth's might be uneventful, but if Agnes or a significant number of kobolds survived, the PCs might have a running battle on their hands. Neither Agnes nor the kobolds stand and fight; they harass the PCs with guerrilla attacks. They do not pursue the PCs into the area protected by Tylwyth's carvings. If the PCs reach this area and avoid the lakefront, they are safe.

Back in Tylwyth's treehouse, Tylwyth and the bookas prepare a magnificent feast. Tylwyth is excellent company, full of rustic humor and anecdotes. He is old even for an elf and absent-minded, but he does have charm. He entertains the PCs for as long as they wish to stay. Once tidied, his home is comfortable and quaint. The scenery is beautiful, and the sculpture garden is unforgettable. When the PCs leave, the bookas flutter about in what passes for sadness. Tylwyth thanks the PCs again and extends an eternal welcome to his grove. In addition, he gives one gift to each PC. DMs may choose appropriate gifts from the following list or make up their own:

- A *folding boat*. Unlike the version in the *DMG*, this unfolds into a small, two person rowboat. It does not require a command word and must be physically unfolded, requiring 5 rounds.
- A *flatbox* (*ToM*) about 1' long, 8" wide, and 2" deep, with a capacity of 7 cubic feet and 100 lbs.
- A watertight, virtually indestructible cherry book-box, worth 100 gp.
- An ornate walking stick that, with a touch of a button and a flick of the wrist, telescopes out to a maximum length of 10 feet.
- A beautiful recorder. Tylwyth is not a great musician, so this recorder does not give any sort of bonus to bards, but it is worth 150 gp as an object of art.
- Six arrows. The wooden head of each is carved to resemble the head of a different type of bird. When fired, each makes the sound of the bird that it resembles. Each arrow is worth 50 gp.
- A massive pipe worth 300 gp.
- A pair of inlaid mahogany candlesticks worth 300 gp for the set.

Tylwyth presents a very special gift to his niece or nephew. The gift appears to be a rounded, palm-sized rectangle of wood. It is actually a puzzle box with nearly invisible seams. A person knowing the trick of it can open the box to reveal its contents: a small hand lens and a set of 40 tiny elven figurines, each carved in minute detail. If the figurines are examined with the lens, each reveals itself to be a perfect replica of a member of the Teg clan, including some clansmen long dead. One of the carvings is of the elf PC as a child. This set took Tylwyth years to carve and would be worth a fortune to the proper buyer. If the elf PC is crass enough to try to sell it, the PC might profit in the short term; however, the DM might have some ill luck befall the PC at some later date.

Concluding the Adventure

PCs who rescue Tylwyth each receive a 200 XP story award. If Agnes is permanently defeated, add a 100 XP award. Players who played their roles well should receive an additional 100 XP, while those who played poorly should receive a –100 XP penalty. If the player of the elf PC completely failed to rise to the occasion ("Who cares about this stupid old woodcarver anyway?"), he or she receives no XP story awards.

If Agnes or a substantial number of kobolds survived, the PCs might decide to stay and make the neighborhood safe for Tylwyth. There are many additional opportunities for further adventure. The elf PC needs to return to Clan Teg for the rite of passage. Here, the PCs might become embroiled in the internal politics of the elf clans, including raids and rivalries, love triangles, and power struggles. In the future, Clan Teg might call on the PCs to assist them against a terrible enemy. "Things That Go Bump in the Night" (Issue #38) could be easily adapted for this purpose. Ω

(continued from page 9) **LETTERS**

Coming in Issue #82

The big annoucement at this past GEN CON left me wondering about the future of *DUNGEON Adventures*. Will the magazine be switching over to 3rd Edition when the new rules come out? Also, will the magazine provide conversion notes (sidebars, maybe?) for readers still using the 2nd Edition rules?

Kelly Merchant
Detroit, MI

We'll talk more about 3rd Edition in the next issue, but the short answer to your first question is Yes. When 3rd Edition is released in August 2000, the magazine will begin publishing 3rd Edition adventures. The switch from 2nd Edition to 3rd Edition will occur in Issue #82. (Issue #81 will be the last issue of 2nd Edition adventures.)

We have no plans to reserve space for 2nd Edition conversion sidebars, since the two editions are not so different as to require them. Although 3rd Edition brings some significant improvements to the D&D® rules, the adventures themselves probably won't change much—a few rules here, a few monster statistics there.

DUNGEON Adventures *experienced a similar transition between 1st Edition and 2nd Edition; we expect that our dedicated readers will embrace the new game, and we plan to update our guidelines in the coming months so that our contributors can familiarize themselves with 3rd Edition formats and changes.* Ω

SIDE TREKS

BY PETER HOPKINS

Artwork and Cartography by Stephen Daniele

"A Feast of Flesh" is an AD&D® Side Trek adventure designed for 5–8 characters of levels 3–5 (about 24 total levels). The module takes place in a small farming village, but any rural town or village will suffice. At least one party member (priest or paladin) should have the ability to cast *cure disease*. The PCs are either passing through the village or seeking safe lodging for the night.

For the Dungeon Master

Beneath the village of Shaerie lies a labyrinth of tunnels containing a nest of giant boring beetles. Individually, these creatures are not much more intelligent than other giant beetle varieties. However, this particular nest has developed a communal intelligence with a level of consciousness and reasoning that approximates the human brain. These beetles can organize themselves into a roving pack that cleverly attacks and outflanks prey.

The beetles feed on decayed organic matter. Over the last several days, they have hunted and killed most of the animals in Shaerie, and even a few people, dragging them down into their network of tunnels and leaving them to rot. The beetles have begun cultivating a number of molds, fungi, and saprophytic plants, including several shriekers and phycomids that the beetles use as sentries near various entrances to their labyrinth.

The beetles' tunnel network lies just beneath the surface of the village, and villagers trying to cross a field or road have occasionally fallen into the tunnels by accident, only to find themselves torn apart by the beetles, which scamper out of the darkness from seemingly every direction. Because they are so close to the surface, the beetles can sense vibrations caused by footfalls. They usually allow people to enter the village by the main road, but they are less inclined to let visitors leave. They crawl out of their lair in droves to attack single targets attempting to leave or move about the village. Their combined intelligence enables them to emerge at various points to surround their prey. The villagers know the true nature of the menace and have chosen to remain in their homes, unaware that the beetles have chewed through floorboards and bored through walls to reach people locked within.

The beetles recently completed a subterranean trench around the outskirts of the village, close enough to the surface that anyone trying to flee through the fields fall into the trench, to be caught by the beetles or a randomly placed phycomid growth. The map for this adventure shows the village of Shaerie and the layout of the tunnels beneath the village.

Giant boring beetles (18): AC 3; MV 6, burrow 3; HD 5; hp 25 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 5–20; SZ L (9' long); ML 14; INT semi (4); AL N; XP 175; *MM*/18.

If more than half of the beetles are slain, the beetles lose their communal intelligence and "pack" mentality. Their Intelligence drops to Animal (1), and their morale drops to 11.

The Village of Shaerie

Read or paraphrase the following boxed text as the characters approach Shaerie from the east:

> The trade road leads to a small village consisting of no more than a dozen homes. Tended pastures mark the hillsides north of the village, while the land around the village itself is overgrown with fields of golden wheat ready for harvest.
>
> The village looks peaceful and quiet, far removed from the hustle and bustle of the distant city.

A FEAST OF FLESH

Shaerie is a closely knit farming community. Its citizens share the responsibility for growing and harvesting the wheat fields. The villagers rely on money from the crops to sustain them through the cold, barren winter. The arrival of the beetles has forestalled the harvest, and unless they are driven away, the wheat will molder in the fields. More important than the crops are the villagers themselves; they have become prisoners in their own homes, too scared to venture outside.

There are several holes leading into the beetles' underground labyrinth, but they are carefully hidden and difficult to spot from a distance. (Sinkholes are visible to PCs standing within 10 feet.) Characters entering Shaerie see few signs of life. However, closer inspection of the buildings reveals that there are people living in Shaerie. Villagers spotting the PCs gesture frantically, doing their best to usher characters indoors without causing enough ruckus to arouse the beetles.

The villagers have little money to offer the PCs as a reward for killing or driving away the beetles. However, the PCs' own welfare should be reward enough. Any attempt to leave Shaerie on foot or horseback brings 1d4+1 beetles to the surface. The beetles emerge from various points around Shaerie, ensuring that their prey has no safe avenue to flee.

Village Key

All residents of Shaerie are 0-level farmers with the following statistics: AC 10; MV 12; hp 1d6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; roll 2d4+6 for ability scores; ML 7; AL LG. The adults have armed themselves with pitchforks (Dmg 1d6+1), sickles (Dmg 1d4+1), and knives (Dmg 1d3).

1. O'Camush Residence. When the PCs enter Shaerie from the east, this is the first house they see. The house and stables are well-maintained. Locked inside the house are Glyn O'Camush (hp 4), his wife Della (hp 3), and his two young daughters, Ezmerelda and Victoria (hp 2 each). The family knows about the sinkholes located behind their home and watch them closely for signs of activity.

2. Morris Residence. This cozy domicile belongs to Irene Morris (hp 4), a widow with three children. Her eldest son Matthew was slain by the beetles yesterday when he left the house to check on the horses. The beetles had broken through the floor of the stables and killed the horses. When Matthew set foot outside, two more beetles scuttled out from the sinkhole behind the house and attacked him. Irene's younger children—16-year-old Thomas (hp 5) and 12-year-old Kelly (hp 3)—remain in the house with their sorrowful mother.

3. Kellington Residence. This quaint little house is empty. Its owners, Henry and Odette Kellington, were killed by a pair of beetles that burrowed up through the kitchen floor. Scamp, the Kellingtons' orange cat, has hidden itself in one of the kitchen cupboards. PCs investigating the house might be startled by the cat as it leaps out of its hiding place. The cat is tame and too wise to venture down into the tunnels.

Scamp (domestic cat): AC 6; MV 9; HD ½; hp 2; THAC0 20; #AT 3; Dmg 1–2/1–2/1; SA rear claws for 1–2; SD increase MV to 18 for 1d10 rounds; SZ T; ML 8; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 7 (for rescue only); *MM*/38.

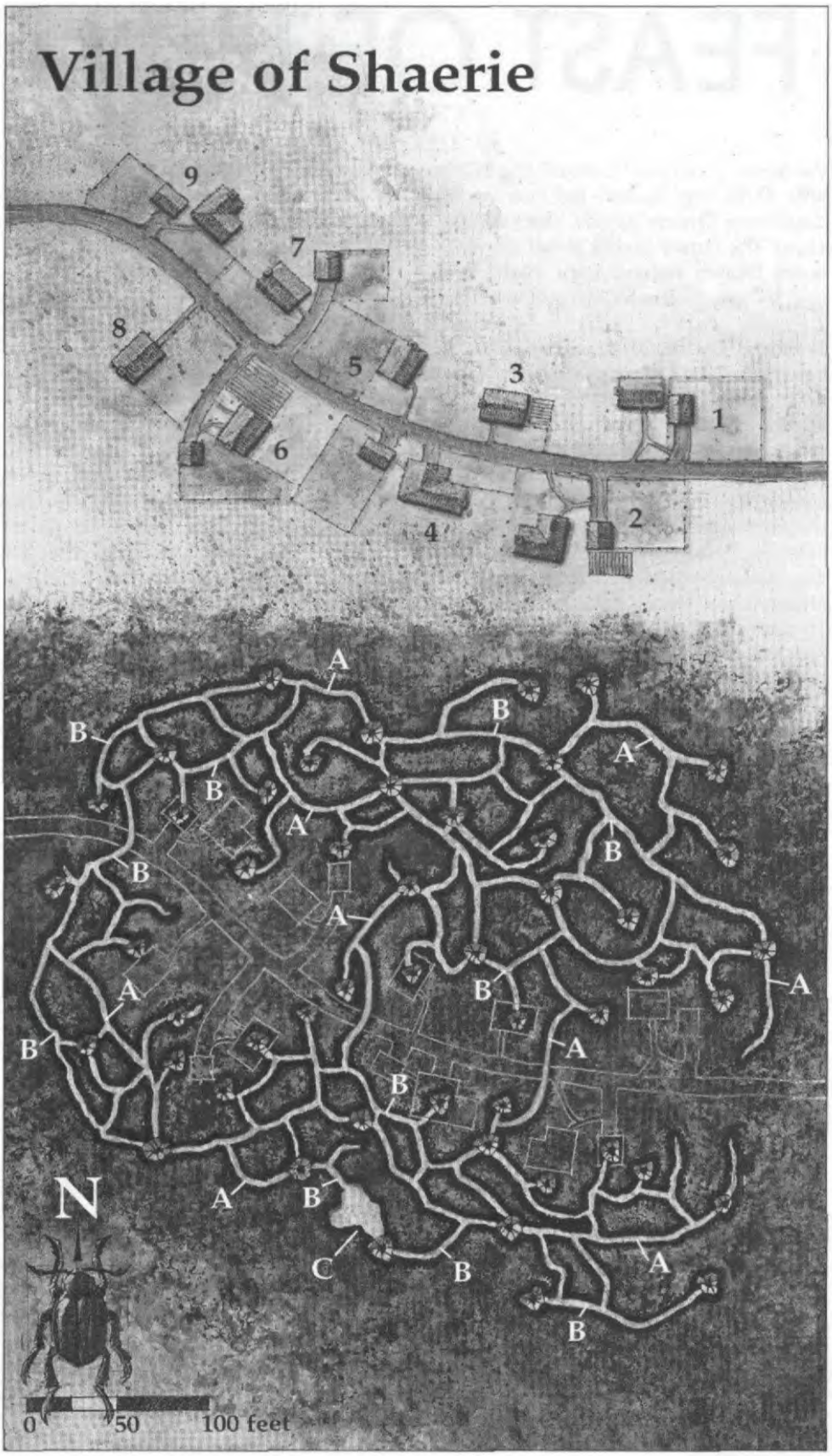
4. Owen's General Store. When the beetles attacked area **5** two days ago, the family living there fled across the street, hoping to find sanctuary in Michael Owen's store. Sensing their vibrations, the beetles attacked the store in droves, breaking through the walls and floor to reach the people inside. No one escaped the beetles this time.

The store is in shambles. Foodstuffs have been knocked from the shelves, tables have been overturned, and barricades made by the store's previous occupants have been broken and cast aside. PCs searching the store for useful items find ten flasks of oil, five hooded lanterns, three 50' ropes, a 15' wooden ladder, six heavy kegs of cider, and numerous farming implements. Any of these items might be useful in fighting or avoiding the beetles. The ladder may be used to climb to the roof of a building. Although the beetles can scale vertical surfaces, they find it difficult to reach such prey and generally stick to easier targets. There aren't nearly enough oil flasks to smoke out the beetles, but the beetles themselves are deterred by fire. (When confronted by an open flame, a beetle must make a successful Morale check or flee.)

5. Hagen Residence. Benjamin Hagen, his wife Narissa, and her feeble sister Amalthea lived here until the beetles broke through the floor and drove them from their home. The Hagens fled to the general store across the road, where they eventually met their demise. The house has been thoroughly searched by the beetles and is in shambles.

6. O'Malley Residence. This well-maintained house is owned by Todd O'Malley (hp 6). He lives here with his sharp-witted wife Kethleen (hp 3), his teenaged sons Malcolm (hp 4) and Donald (hp 3), and his elderly, acerbic mother Grace (hp 2). When the beetles broke into the house three days ago, the family retreated to the stables and hid in the tiny storage loft built above the horse stalls and four-wheeled cart. The beetles have bored new sinkholes in the vicinity, but they have not yet forced their way inside.

Locked in the stables with the family are two draft horses named Beatrice and Buttercup. Todd's sons have considered using the horses to escape and seek help from the nearest town, but the horses are not particularly swift and probably wouldn't make it out of the village.



Beatrice and **Buttercup** (draft horses): AC 7; MV 12; HD 3; hp 18 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1–3; SZ L; ML 7; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 65; *MM*/194.

7. Dalaney Residence. Scott Dalaney (hp 4) and his wife Brenda (hp 4) live here. They are a young couple who came to Shaerie last year, and they are eager to start a family. Neither they nor their draft horse have been attacked by the beetles, but they are aware of the danger and have barricaded the doors and windows with lumber and furniture. If these defenses are breached, the Dalaneys head down into their root cellar. The cellar has thick stone walls and a stone floor to keep the beetles from breaking through, although the determined beetles could chew through the heavy oak door leading to the cellar in 1d4 turns.

8. Drew Residence. This run-down house belongs to Emmet Drew (hp 6), a widower with a 24-year-old son named Emmet, Jr. (hp 5) and a 22-year-old daughter named Georgina (hp 4). The family also has a large but friendly mastiff named Pouncer. So far, the Drews have not been troubled by the giant beetles, but they have seen the sinkhole beside their house. Despite efforts to keep the dog silent, Pouncer barks whenever he hears noises beneath the floor, and Emmet feels it's only a matter of time before his family is chased outside or killed. If the beetles attack, Pouncer protects his owners long enough for them to flee the house.

Pouncer (war dog): AC 6; MV 12; HD 2+2; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2–8; SZ M; ML 10; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 65; *MM*/57.

9. O'Shea Residence. Shaerie's mayor, Liam O'Shea (hp 4), lives here with his older sister Jessica (hp 3) and her children: 17-year-old Margaret (hp 4), 14-year-old Brian (hp 5), and 10-year-old Tiffany (hp 2). The O'Sheas recently heard the beetles' savage attack on the adjacent stablehouse, but no one has ventured out to see how the horses fared. (All three horses were slain and devoured.)

Liam offers to pay the PCs 50 gp to rid Shaerie of its menace. The village cannot afford to pay a higher reward. However,

if the PCs are truly selfish, Liam will ask Jessica to give them her fine gold bracelet (worth 100 gp) in exchange for their aid. If good-aligned PCs agree to help under these terms, their XP awards should be halved as a penalty for their greed.

The Tunnels Below

The beetle tunnels are roughly 5 feet in diameter with walls of loosely packed earth. The entrances to the labyrinth resemble sinkholes 3–4 feet in diameter. The sinkholes descend roughly 5–8 feet and are difficult to climb because of their loosely packed nature. (PCs must make a successful climbing roll to climb up a sinkhole.) Potent and devastating spells such as *fireball* have a 5% chance per point of damage of causing a collapse when cast inside a tunnel.

Whenever a PC walks across a tunnel, there is a 10% chance that the weight causes the passage to collapse, plunging the character into the labyrinth below. The sound of the collapsing tunnel leads 1d4+1 beetles to investigate. The beetles arrive in 1d4 rounds.

It has taken the beetles less than one week to dig the network of tunnels under Shaerie, and they are continually boring new ones. They can also excavate new exits, creating sinkholes wherever they choose. There are several areas of note within the labyrinth, as indicated below.

Characters fighting in the tunnels suffer a –2 attack penalty due to close quarters. Size L weapons cannot be wielded in the tunnels, and Size M weapons impose an additional –2 attack penalty. The beetles suffer no attack penalties when fighting in the tunnels.

A. Phycomid Patch. Phycomids resemble blobs of decomposing, milk-colored matter with capped fungi growing out of them. The beetles have bred these fungi patches from the remains of slain horses, sheep, and people. Phycomids are alerted by heat, sound, and vibrations. When they attack, phycomids extrude a tube and discharge globules of fluid up to 1d6+6 feet away. Luckily, these hideous fungi are visible from a safe distance once their true nature is determined.

In addition to inflicting damage, the phycomid's fluid globules infect the victim. If the victim fails a saving throw vs. poison, he begins to sprout mushroom-like growths 1d4+4 rounds after infestation, causing 1d4+4 points of damage. The growths then spread throughout the host body, killing it in 1d4+4 turns unless a *cure disease* spell is cast.

Phycomid (1 per location): AC 5; MV 3; HD 5; hp 18; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 3–6/3–6; SA infestation; SD immune to mind-affecting attacks; SZ T (2' diameter); ML 14; INT non (0); AL N; XP 650; *MM*/120 (fungus).

B. Shrieker. Sprouting from a heap of offal in each of these areas is a shrieker specially cultivated by the giant beetles. Light within 30 feet or movement within 10 feet causes the shrieker to emit a piercing shriek that lasts 1d3 turns. The noise has a 50% chance per round of attracting 1d4+2 giant beetles, which arrive in 1d4 rounds.

Shrieker (1 per location): AC 7; MV 1; HD 3; hp 12; THAC0 17; #AT 0; Dmg nil; SD noise; SZ M (4' tall); ML 12; INT non (0); AL N; XP 120; *MM*/120 (fungus).

C. Giant Beetle Eggs. The beetles have dug this underground chamber to house their eggs. The eggs are several days from hatching, but there are exactly forty of them embedded in the wet soil. Unless the PCs find this nest and destroy the eggs, they hatch and unleash several more giant beetles upon the village. (Granted, some of the newly hatched beetles will kill each other, but that still leaves several dozen to terrorize the remaining villagers.)

The eggs are large (3' diameter) and coated with a sticky salivic residue that completely protects them from nonmagical fire. However, the eggs are also quite fragile (AC 10) and can withstand 6 points of damage each. Sprouting from the floor in the middle of the cave are four shriekers (see area **B** for statistics) that alert the beetles to the presence of intruders. The beetles (1d6+6 of them) immediately swarm to the nest to attack any intruders found therein.

The tunnels leading to the cave descend markedly, as this chamber is far deeper than the rest of the labyrinth (30 feet below ground level). Any large explosion (such as a *fireball*) destroys the eggs and has a 50% chance of triggering a collapse, leaving a sunken pit in the ground behind the general store.

Ending the Beetle Threat

Characters who stomp their feet and make a great deal of noise can lure the beetles to the surface, but fighting a horde of giant beetles should prove no easy feat. PCs can find sanctuary on the village rooftops, causing the beetles to leave in search of easier prey. Also keep in mind that the beetles have manifested a form of intelligence that makes them far more devious—and dangerous—than hungry, mindless insects. They could bore tunnels under a house until the weight of the building causes it to collapse. If this happens, the DM should have PCs on the roof make a Dexterity check; those who fail their roll sustain 1d6 points of damage from the fall and automatically lose initiative the following round, immediately falling prey to the swarm of giant beetles.

If half the beetles are slain, the remaining beetles lose their ability to reason and begin behaving in a more hunger-driven, mindless manner. In this state, they are more easily frightened away. If they fail a Morale check and are unable to retreat into the labyrinth, the beetles scamper off into the surrounding fields and never return to Shaerie.

The PCs can keep the beetles at bay with open flames (such as torches), driving them deeper into their network of caves. Collapsing sections of tunnel is fruitless, since the beetles can bore through the fallen earth relatively quickly. The PCs must find the beetles' nest and destroy the eggs. If the PCs kill all of the beetles but fail to locate the nest, Shaerie is plagued by dozens more of the carapaced killers. If the PCs destroy the beetles' eggs, each PC should receive a 1,000-XP story award. The villagers are relieved and grateful, although they have little to offer PCs as a reward except food and beds for the night. Ω

Peter works as a technical writer and says that beetles give him the creeps. He has another Side Trek scheduled for a future issue.

WIND CHILL

BY KEVIN CARTER

Fire and ice

Artwork & Cartography by Stephen Daniele

By the time this module sees print, Kevin will be a second-year Evolutionary Biology major at UCLA. When not DMing, he can be found hiking, drawing, playing ultimate (a form of frisbee-soccer), or practicing Capoeira (a Brazilian martial art).

"Wind Chill" is an AD&D® adventure that takes place in a isolated mountain range in the DM's own campaign world. This adventure is best suited for a party of 3–6 characters of levels 4–6 (about 25 total levels). At the DM's discretion, "Wind Chill" can be played as a solo adventure with one nature-based PC of levels 7–8. A ranger or druid will be helpful but not necessary. At least one PC should possess a weapon of +1 or greater enchantment. This module, styled like a ghost story, features a new monster called a windigo, a wind spirit from Canadian Indian folklore.

Starting the Adventure

The PCs are traveling through an isolated, coniferous mountain range for whatever reason the DM desires. When ready to begin the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

> You have spent the better part of a day traversing the lonely crags of this secluded mountain range. The sun has begun to dip below the jagged horizon, casting great streaks of crimson and violet across the sky. Your labored breath curls in the thin air, while the temperature continues to drop. You trudge a few more paces through the knee-deep snow, hoping to find a suitable campsite past the next copse of evergreen trees.
>
> Up ahead you notice a bizarre set of tracks in the fresh snow. They originate from behind a rocky outcropping fifteen yards to the east. The tracks could be human boot prints, but they are spaced too far apart. Strangely enough, a small amount of soot has settled in the depressions of the prints. As you visually follow the path of the tracks, the boot prints become farther apart until they disappear entirely. At the sight of the last print, the gnarled bark of the neighboring pines bears hideous ashen burn marks.

The PCs are free to investigate the footprints. The prints leading up to the burn marks are deep, as if the originator had been jumping instead of walking. The DM should reveal this information only if a successful Tracking proficiency check is rolled or if a player specifically asks if there is anything peculiar about the depth of the prints.

For the Dungeon Master

The eerie tracks belonged to Ya Wyven, a young warrior of the Li Connagan barbarian tribe. Wyven journeyed from the valley of his clan some two months ago with a sacred tribal artifact called the Tellstone, a nonmagical rock that has the creation story of the Li Connagan tribe etched onto its smooth surface. Wyven took the Tellstone on a spiritual quest to return the stone to its legendary place of origin—the root system of the Elder Glade. This hallowed grove has long been an important locale in the Li Connagan religion. Wyven, eager to prove himself, ignored the warnings of his elders and made the perilous journey on his own.

Wyven's travels brought him into the territory of a windigo: a vampiric wind spirit. The windigo stalked the young warrior for days. Roughly one hour before the PCs arrived in the valley of the windigo, Wyven made his valiant last stand against the evil spirit. Ya Wyven's bizarre footprints were the result of the windigo's feeding habits (as detailed in the monster's description). What is left of Wyven's camp hints at what is in store for the PCs now that they too are being hunted by the wind demon.

The Rift of the Windigo

The rift of the windigo is a steep-walled canyon nestled between several windswept crags. The rift itself was carved several thousand years ago by a passing glacier. The canyon is littered with huge glacial drop stones, and its steep walls are sprinkled with great evergreens. A forest of twisted birch and pine dominates the narrow valley floor.

It is assumed that the PCs are traveling though the rift in either winter or early spring. The DM must modify the boxed text to adapt this adventure to another season. While the PCs are traveling in the rift of the windigo, random encounters should not occur, as most denizens of the mountain chain avoid the "haunted" valley. From the moment the PCs see the tracks, they are spotted by the windigo, who is perched on a ledge some 200 yards away. The PC should not be able to spot the windigo from their position due to its quasi-invisibility. (See page 31 for details.)

During the adventure the PCs may decide that the best course of action is to flee the mountains and escape the clutches of the windigo. This doesn't prove easy, as the rift is surrounded by steep cliffs. Unless the PCs attempt a direct ascent of the icy canyon walls, the only way out of the valley is through one of two glacier-carved passes (as shown on the map). Movement rate is reduced by half due to the thick snow and uneven terrain. At best, it will take the PCs a day to leave the valley on foot. Should the PCs actually attempt the dangerous climb of the rift walls, the DM should consult the *DMG* and apply the necessary climbing modifiers. The windigo does not hesitate to attack while the PCs are vulnerable on the cliff face.

Wyven's Camp

Following the tracks to their source is simple, as the boot prints are easily visible (even to someone with no tracking skills) in the knee-deep snow. If the PCs ignore the tracks and continue on their merry way, the DM should hint to them that it would be a good idea to investigate such a strange phenomenon. If PCs still insist on moving on, then they have missed valuable clues that could have helped them in the night to come. The DM should skip this section and continue the adventure with the "Night of the Windigo" section.

Once the PCs have traced the tracks to their point of origin, the DM should read or paraphrase the following:

> The tracks originate from a small camp consisting of a wrinkled deerskin bedroll and the smoldering remains of a campfire, on top of which sits an iron kettle filled with an acrid smelling black pulp. A leather backpack slumps against the trunk of a fallen pine. Circumnavigating the camp is a series of upright wooden stakes driven firmly into the frozen earth. The stakes, each about four feet high, are carved with ornate spiral designs.
>
> The camp is perched on a rocky ledge overlooking a forlorn, snow-covered meadow. The only sound that can be heard, aside from the beating of your own heart, is the distant rush of wind through the towering pine trees.

The spiral designs on the stakes are nonmagical protection runes of the Li Connagan barbarian clan. According to Li Connagan religion, these runes offer protection from storms. Wyven carved the runes in a desperate attempt to protect himself from the windigo. A PC can correctly identify the markings by making a successful Religion or Heraldry nonweapon proficiency check at a –4 penalty.

The strange pulp in the kettle is a mixture called geck, a sludge commonly brewed by mountaineers because its powerful aroma helps to ward off mosquitoes. Any PC with a Survival proficiency automatically identifies the mixture. Otherwise, a successful Herbalism check does the job. The PCs might find it strange to see the freshly brewed mixture, as mosquitoes are never a problem during the winter months. Wyven brewed the geck to defend himself from the mosquito swarms summoned by the windigo.

Within the backpack is an assortment of odd items including a small hatchet, two wineskins (one empty), three frozen bear steaks, 10 feet of rope, a spade, two beaver pelts, a pair of snowshoes, a small knife, an ornate seal bone necklace (10 gp), and the Tellstone wrapped in a shroud of charcoal-etched cloth. These charcoal markings are actually the hieroglyphic writing of the Li Connagan clan. The glyphs communicate the importance of the Tellstone and tell of Wyven's quest to bury it under the Elder Glade. (See the "For the Dungeon Master" section for details.) The PCs can decipher the meaning of the glyphs through the same methods used to identify the runes on the stakes or by casting a *comprehend*

languages spell. There is also a pouch in the bottom of the backpack containing two painted wolf teeth, three onyx shavings (20 gp each), a silver ingot (50 gp), and a sprig of a raspberry bush containing five *goodberries* given to Wyven by the tribal shaman.

If any PC stirs up the ash in the campfire, he or she discovers that the cinders are still warm.

The Night of the Windigo

The PCs are in for a horrific night now that they have fallen into the clutches of the windigo. As soon as the last rays of the sun disappear behind the mountainous skyline, the wind spirit begins to stalk the PCs, gauging their strengths and weaknesses while preparing for its final attack. Because the windigo revels in striking fear into the hearts of its victims, it attempts to scare the PCs in any way it can. The windigo never purposely allows itself to be seen by its prey until it is ready to move in for the kill. As a result, the PCs should not have a clear idea about what they are up against until it is almost too late. Throughout the adventure, the windigo makes full use of its partial invisibility to resist any counterattack the PCs might plan.

Although the windigo's specific tactics are detailed below chronologically, it also engages in general scare tactics throughout the night. These tactics include making faint rustling noises in the vegetation, only to disappear back into the brush the second its prey spins around. The windigo also builds on the PCs' paranoia by whispering cryptic threats with its *whispering wind* ability to any PC who strays from the others.

Below is a rough time line of the night's events. The time frame of the adventure can be changed according to the PCs' actions or the personal preferences of the DM. The windigo does not engage in any scare tactics until after the first event has occurred.

Windigo: AC variable; MV 12, fly 24 (A); HD 7; hp 40; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6+1/1d6+1; SA wind blast; SZ L; ML 14; INT very (11); AL CE; XP 5,000.

Spell-like abilities: *audible glamer, whispering wind, gust of wind, polymorph self*, and *summon swarm* (once/day).

8:00 P.M.: Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

The DM should allow the PCs to set up camp for the night. Things are strangely quiet until about eight o'clock, at which time a young man named Jarred trots in from the dark forest, offering a friendly greeting. Jarred is a husky man in his early thirties with weathered skin and thick stubble on his chin. His most striking features, however, are his vivid blue eyes. Jarred, speaking in a baritone voice, claims to be a trapper who has wandered into the valley in search of fresh game. The mountain man is somewhat reserved, yet he is interested in hearing about the PCs' past exploits and deeds. If questioned, Jarred claims to know nothing about the bizarre footprints or the abandoned camp.

Jarred is not who he appears to be. Ever since the PCs found the tracks, the windigo has been watching them from a distance, studying their strengths and weaknesses. Not satisfied with the information that could be gleaned from such a distance, it has decided to study the PCs up close. The windigo *polymorphed* into a mountain man whom it killed a few weeks ago. (The windigo's *polymorph* ability is somewhat different from that of the *polymorph* spell; see the monster description on page 31 for details.) Using this seemingly friendly form, the windigo hopes to learn as much about the PCs as possible.

While listening to the PCs' stories, the windigo pays close attention to their weapons and tries to gauge their abilities as best it can. After the windigo has gleaned significant information, "Jarred" announces that he is going to gather some fresh firewood, only to discard the mountain man's skin some 20 yards from the PCs' camp. Should the PCs conduct a search for the missing mountain man, they have a base 65% chance of finding the skin, which is hanging on a pine branch, swaying gently in the cold mountain breeze. If the PCs are hesitant to let Jarred wander off by himself, the windigo uses its *audible glamer* ability to create the sound of an approaching beast. While the PCs are distracted, the wind spirit slips into the forest, discarding Jarred's skin at the perimeter of the PCs' campsite. (The windigo has a base 80% chance of pulling this off unnoticed.) The DM should allow the windigo to exploit any information it learned in later encounters with the PCs.

If the windigo is attacked while disguised as Jarred, it flees into the forest, discarding Jarred's skin as soon as it loses sight of the PCs. Should the PCs somehow corner the windigo, the wind spirit fights to the death. If Jarred is attacked without suspicion that he is not what he appears to be, the PCs might be subject to an alignment change.

12:00 A.M.: Ghostly Winds

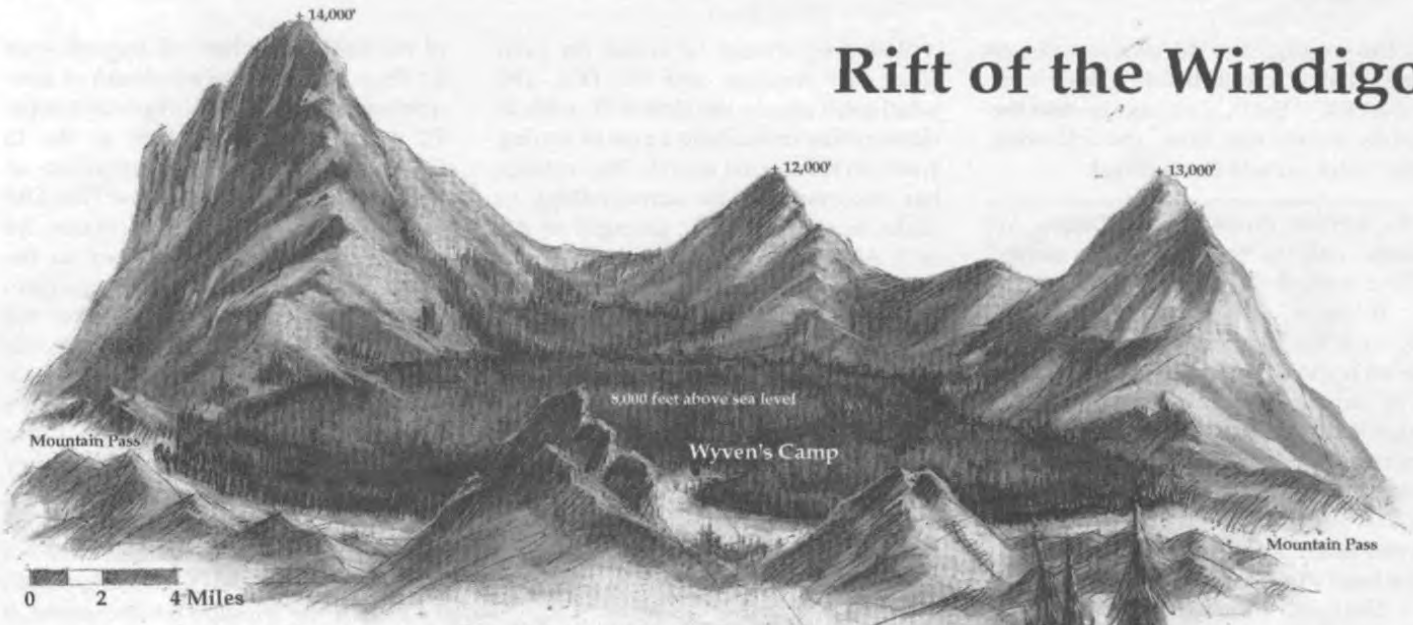
The following event takes place around midnight. The DM should read or paraphrase the following to whichever PC is on watch during this time. If the PCs do not establish watch for the night, one PC should awaken to notice this strange phenomenon. The DM should also modify the following text depending on how the PCs set up their camp.

> The stillness of the cold mountain air has been interrupted for about the past twenty minutes by a strong, steady breeze blowing over a northern ridge. As you stare lazily into the flickering flames of your campfire, you come to a shocking realization. The flames and smoke of your fire are undisturbed by the wind! Now that you think about it, you cannot even feel the breeze against your exposed cheeks, yet the wind can still be heard gusting all around you.
>
> The shock of this strange discovery allows you to shake off the drowsiness that has overtaken you during your watch. You glance upward toward the evergreen trees. Silhouetted against the blue-black sky, they take on a more menacing appearance. Not a single needle or branch quivers as the wind continues to sound through the air.

The windigo, hiding some 100 yards away on a small hillock, is attempting to spook the PCs.

The windigo uses its *audible glamer* ability to create the sound of wind when, in fact, the skies are calm. The wind spirit does not reveal itself, nor does it attack unless found and cornered.

Rift of the Windigo



2:00 A.M.: The Rain of Bones

A few hours after midnight, the windigo attempts another scare tactic. When the event is ready to begin, read or paraphrasing the following:

> A sudden, clattering noise emanates from the edge of your camp. After quickly scanning the surroundings for signs of danger, you discover the grotesque source of the noise. A charred rib bone is bouncing down a large boulder. A blackened leg bone lands in the snow to your left.
>
> Suddenly the sky bursts into a torrent of ash-blackened bones. As quickly as it started, the rain of bones stops, finishing with a human skull that, after careening through the snow-covered branches of a pine tree, settles at your feet.

This charnel rain is all that remains of Wyven, the Li Connagan warrior. The windigo is flying some 100 yards above, dropping bones on the PCs. Should any PC flee and become separated from his comrades, the windigo does not miss the opportunity to attack the lone character.

The windigo is flying high enough above the PCs that they should not be able to spot it, as the wind spirit's transparent body is invisible at distances greater than 50 feet.

3:00 A.M.: Final Attack!

A half-hour of deathly silence settles in on the forest after the last bone falls. (See previous encounter for details.) Once the PCs have had 3 turns to react, read or paraphrase the following:

> Scanning the area of the forest illuminated by your flickering firelight, you become aware of a strange buzzing in your ear. Without thinking, you swat the annoying insect away and notice that your arm is speckled with a half dozen or so small grayish dots. You instinctively brush at your arm. Surprisingly, all the gray flecks smear into a deep crimson blood!
>
> A different buzzing noise begins to drone in your ears. This time, the humming is deeper and more hollow. It emanates from the forest, which seems to crawl as if the air itself were alive. The droning grows louder until, suddenly, thousand upon thousands of insects explode into the clearing and envelop you.

The windigo summons a swarm of insects to soften up the PCs before it closes in for its final attack. The swarm numbers roughly 560,000 mosquitoes.

Any PC caught within the swarm has a 90% chance per round of suffering 1–4 hit points of damage from blood loss. A PC may reduce the chance to 40% by hiding under a thick blanket or bedroll. The cloud is so dense that it affects the PCs' perceptions. While in the swarm, vision is reduced to 2d4 feet, and any noise short of a thunderclap is drowned out by the horrible buzzing. Every hit point of damage delivered to the swarm kills one cubic foot of mosquitoes. Aside from destroying the swarm, the PCs may drive off the mosquitoes by filling their area with a heavy smoke or by warming some geck, the substance found over the fire in Wyven's camp.

Any spell cast inside the swarm has a base 25% chance of being miscast, with a +5% modifier per point of damage sustained by the caster that round.

Mosquito swarm: AC 6; MV 18; HD nil (hp 2,800); THAC0 see below; #AT special; Dmg see below; SZ T (swarm occupies 2,800 cubic feet); ML 6; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 1,000 (for destroying entire swarm only); *MM*/206 (modified).

The windigo lets the swarm torment the PCs for 3 rounds before it begins the real attack. If the PCs manage to clear the swarm before this time, the following description should be modified:

> The terrible droning noise begins to abate, only to be replaced by something more dreadful.
>
> A deep, unearthly moan filters through the buzzing of the mosquitoes as an icy wind rips through the camp. The swarm is swept up in the great gust that begins to curl around a hazy nexus. A full-blown whirlwind coalesces out of the ghostly air. Pine needles, birch branches, mosquitoes—even small rocks—are swept up into the frenzy of wind.
>
> The harsh wind drives the moisture from your eyes. As quickly as it started, the twister stops, leaving at its center a menacing, seven-foot-tall creature. The figure standing before you is a gaunt, grotesque mockery of the humanoid form. Except for the creature's luminous blue eyes, its body is a twisted collection of mosquitoes, rocks, snow, and pine needles—essentially everything that was caught up in the tornado. It stares at you for only a second with its cold azure eyes before springing forward, slashing with its obsidian claws.

Initiative should be rolled for both sides: the windigo and the PCs. The wind spirit attacks the closest PC with its claws before unleashing a gust of searing wind on the second round. The windigo has incorporated its surroundings to make its physical body, giving it an AC of 3. Although it attacks without fear, it also knows when to retreat. If the battle goes particularly poorly for the windigo (that is, if it is reduced to 20 hp or fewer) it flies straight up in an attempt to buy itself enough time to reuse its wind blast ability.

Concluding the Adventure

This encounter could end in a variety of ways depending on the flow of events. The dawn brings welcome relief to all who survived the night. However, if the windigo was not slain, then the nightmare is far from over, as it definitely returns to haunt the party in subsequent encounters. Should the PCs prove too strong for the windigo, it is content with simply driving the PCs out of its valley.

If the PCs manage to survive the night, the DM should award 100–600 XP to each player, depending on whether it was hot dice or quick thinking that saved them.

The encounter with the windigo opens the door for many future adventures. Now that the PCs have possession of the Tellstone, what will they do with it? They may sell it to a collector or antiquarian for a good sum. A philanthropic PC might return the stone to the Li Connagan tribe or to take it upon him- or herself to finish Wyven's quest. (The DM may award a 500-XP story bonus for this.) Perhaps the PCs journey to the Elder Glade only to discover that a great evil has befallen the grove; DMs can use "To Save a Forest" in Issue #61 for this quest. Perhaps the stone hints at the location of a great artifact within the DM's campaign. Should the windigo prove itself too powerful for the PCs, they might find shelter in a mountain cave that the DM wishes the PCs to explore. (The windigo's claustrophobia will not allow it to pursue the PCs underground.)

Even if the windigo is vanquished, it might still haunt the PCs in subsequent encounters, taking the form of its children—the mosquitoes. Ω

Nodwick
www.nodwick.com
by Aaron Williams
SURRENDER, YOU NAUGHTY CREATURE! WE DEFEATED YOUR MOSQUITOES WITH MY CITRONELLA PRAYER CANDLES!
BAH! I SHALL PREVAIL...
FOR MY BODY IS MADE UP OF THE VERY ROCKS AND SOIL OF THIS VALLEY! YOU FACE THE EARTH ITSELF!
PLUS ONE HENCH-MAN.
HUH?
YOU ALSO MANAGED TO SUCK UP OUR TENTS, YEAGAR'S KEG OF "OLD GREYHAWKEE LIGHT", AND OUR EVENING REPAST: "ORCISH SURPRISE."
THAT WOULD EXPLAIN MY SUDDEN URGE TO RESUME MY GASEOUS FORM...
AH, YOU'VE REACHED STAGE ONE. STAGE TWO OF ORCISH SURPRISE STARTS WITH INTERNAL HEMORRHAGING.

Windigo

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any remote
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVE CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Special
INTELLIGENCE:	Very (11–12)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic evil
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	0 to 5
MOVEMENT:	12, Fly 24 (A)
HIT DICE:	7
THAC0:	13
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d6+2/1d6+2
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Searing wind gust
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	+1 or better weapons to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	See below
SIZE:	L (7' tall)
MORALE:	Steady (11–12)
XP VALUE:	5,000

A windigo is a vampiric wind spirit that haunts isolated wilderness areas. Cruel hunters by nature, windigos revel in stalking and terrorizing their prey. The hunt is often more important to these elusive spirits than the kill itself.

Windigo spirits originate from the Elemental Plane of Air. Their true form is a noncorporeal cloud of haze of faintly humanoid shape with sky blue eyes that glow faintly from some internal light. Before entering combat, windigos surround their noncorporeal bodies with debris from their environment, giving them solid forms (see below). The seldom-heard voice of a windigo sounds like a demonic chorus of fleeting whispers that originates from all directions at once. Other than their voices, windigos make no sound at all, even while walking over a forest floor covered with dry leaves.

Combat: A windigo engages in direct combat only after thoroughly terrorizing its prey. Due to its transparent body, a windigo is 95% invisible while standing still and 50% invisible while moving. At distances greater than fifty feet a windigo is completely invisible. It uses this power as well as its ghostly silence to stalk its prey.

Before entering combat, the windigo must spend a few seconds creating a physical body for itself. (The windigo suffers a +2 initiative penalty on the first round of combat.) It does so by weaving a whirlwind around its noncorporeal form, lifting leaves, dirt, sand, rocks, or any other small objects from the surrounding environment. After a few seconds, the twirling debris coalesces into the shape of a horribly twisted and willowy humanoid. While in this form, it attacks with claws of jagged rocks or splintered wood. However, their solid state does cause windigos to lose their silent movement.

Because a windigo creates its physical body out of pieces of its environment, it has a variable Armor Class, ranging from 0 to 5, depending upon its surroundings. A windigo comprised of abrasive desert sand, for example, will have AC 5. Were the same wind spirit to create its body out of jagged mountain granite, it would have AC 0. The DM should use common sense when determining a windigo's AC, taking into consideration the materials available in the environment. Otherwise a 1d6 can be rolled, subtracting one to determine the windigo's AC.

Once every 3 rounds a windigo can release a fiery gale with an area of effect equivalent to a *fireball* spell (20' diameter). This searing windblast deals 5d6 points damage (save vs. breath weapon for half damage). This blast is so powerful that, unless a saving throw vs. paralyzation is also made, man-sized or smaller victims are lifted repeatedly into the air, forfeiting all actions for the rest of the round.

Windigos can cast the following spells at will as a 10th-level wizard: *whispering wind, gust of wind, fly* (MV 24, MC: A), *summon swarm* (1/day; mosquitoes only). The windigo has the grotesque ability to seamlessly wear the skins of its victims over its noncorporeal body. While wearing a humanoid's skin, the windigo is able to assume the voice of its "host." For this reason, a windigo can only assume the form of a humanoid creature that it has personally killed. This magical ability is similar in effect to a *polymorph other* spell and is utterly convincing. Once the spell's duration has expired, the skin begins to rip and fray, destroying the illusion.

Habitat/Society: Windigos dwell in lonely wilderness areas. Although they are territorial, it is not uncommon for these elusive wind spirits to disappear from their usual haunting ground, only to reappear hundreds of miles away several years later. Windigos, solitary by nature, are in a constant state of retreat from the ever-advancing tide of civilization. Whenever a windigo is driven deeper into the wilderness, it leaves behind its own unique brand of curse: a persistent plague of mosquitoes that torments the invading settlers. According to legend, windigos fathered the mosquito species as an act of revenge against humanoid races.

Roughly once every three centuries, a few dozen windigo congregate at the site of an epic winter storm. This event, seemingly religious in nature, entails the wind spirits dancing throughout the storm while chanting in their hallow, gusty voices. Aside from this dark ritual, windigos are never found in groups.

Windigos are claustrophobic. They grow agitated if they are stuck under a roof for only a few moments, and rarely do they venture into thick forests, as trees obstruct their vision to the heavens. If they move more than 20 yards from open sky, they are rendered powerless and, on the following round, are instantly destroyed. For this reason, they are never found below ground.

Ecology: Windigos are adept hunters that stalk any intelligent being who dares to venture into their wilderness. These wind spirits are vampiric, needing fresh blood to keep their vaporous bodies from disintegrating.

Windigos are patient, often stalking their prey for days before attacking. Windigos, renowned for striking fear into their victims' hearts, especially enjoy tailing lone travelers or small groups. A common tactic of these evil wind spirits is to flit in and out of the trees behind a group of travelers, only to disappear when someone looks back. After heightening its victims' paranoia, the windigo begins to call softly to the travelers, so softly that its voice can barely be distinguished from a slight breeze. Only after the group is driven into a panic-induced frenzy of cursing or running does a windigo attack. A survivor of such an attack is typically left with intense agoraphobia, breaking out into a cold sweat when the wind is heard rustling through the treetops.

EX KERAPTIS CUM AMORE

BY ANDY MILLER

The only good hero is a dead hero

Artwork & Cartography by Stephen Daniele

This is Andy's fourth appearance in the magazine. He'd like to thank the editors for their advice and encouragement—especially when it looked like the adventure wouldn't be published.

"Ex Keraptis Cum Amore" is an AD&D® adventure for 4–6 good-aligned characters of levels 8–12 (about 50 total levels). The PCs should be experienced, well-balanced, and have an assortment of magical items if they hope to survive.

The bulk of the adventure takes place in the Burning Cliffs (hex Z3-45) just north of the lands of Iuz in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® campaign setting. The PCs are introduced to the adventure when they find a map and cryptic riddle hidden in the bottom of a treasure chest.

This adventure was inspired by the adventures S2: *White Plume Mountain* and *Return to White Plume Mountain*, although neither adventure is needed to run this one. Other helpful texts include the various *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*® appendices, as well as the *ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA*™ tomes and *Wizard's Spell Compendium* volumes.

Beginning the Adventure

When the PCs open a chest from one of their most recent adventures, along with whatever treasure they find is a tattered piece of parchment with flowing letters, signed with a stylized "K" entwined with snakes. Any sage or PC with the Ancient History proficiency recognizes the signature as the symbol of Keraptis, a powerful wizard who vanished from the face of Oerth some 1,300 years ago. Local historians or anyone from the Free City of Greyhawk has also heard the more recent tale of White Plume Mountain.

In 576 CY, three powerful magical weapons were stolen from the City of Greyhawk. Soon after, a message was delivered to each of the weapon's previous owners, challenging them to send heroes to recover the weapons from a trap-ridden dungeon beneath White Plume Mountain, near Rift Canyon. The messages were signed with the symbol of the archmage Keraptis.

Many heroes descended into the bowels of White Plume Mountain. Less

than a handful returned, carrying with them the legendary weapons. It was thought that Keraptis had failed in his nefarious scheme. Since then, however, the weapons have again vanished, presumably taken by Keraptis's hand.

The parchment found by the PCs (see the handout on page 57) is inscribed with the following words, written in the dried blood of some long-dead beast:

Three were taken, three I'll keep
From the fiend who rules the north;
Stolen far and hidden deep
In lands where fire issues forth.

Seek ye there the melted fane
Standing west of fiery stack;
Beneath the god of blood and pain,
Bravely step and don't look back.

The Gem is held with stony eyes
By the beast in the burning pit;
The Wand beyond hot geysers lies
Left where the undead sit.

The magic Stone you've yet to find
In tripled-double pyramid;
All three fixed, and you are mine
To serve or perish, as I bid.

I care not, mortal king or fool,
What heroes you deign to send;
As slaves they'll heed my darkest rule
Or meet their fiery end.

On the back of the parchment is a crude map depicting the Burning Cliffs. At the bottom of the page is a drawing of some kind of disassembled rod or wand. See the illustration on page 37.

For the Dungeon Master

The "fiend who rules the north" mentioned in the first stanza refers to the cambion Iuz, from whom three powerful magical items were stolen. These items—the *Gem of Souls*, the *Wand of Stars*, and the *Stone of Life*—together form a powerful artifact called the *Infinity Wand*. Certain sages are aware of the item and its alleged powers (see "The *Infinity Wand*" sidebar). However, researching its origins requires a PC or sage with the Ancient History and Spellcraft proficiencies as well as four *legend lore* spells and 5,000 gp for the acquisition of rare tomes and scrolls. These references are available only in the libraries of powerful wizard societies or the private libraries of wizards like Tenser and Mordenkainen.

Keraptis is responsible for neither the poem nor the crude map on the back, although there is little to suggest otherwise. In truth, the poem and map are the work of an imposter—a one-time rival of the archmage who built the notorious deathtrap dungeon beneath White Plume Mountain. (This archmage, contrary to popular belief, was not Keraptis but an imposter himself.)

This "rival" who now believes, in his madness, that he is the real Keraptis is actually a Suel lich named Zhawar Orlysse. For years, Orlysse felt overshadowed by Keraptis and bitterly tried to surpass his work, only to be thwarted at every turn. Believing that Keraptis had created the ultimate deathtrap with White Plume Mountain, Orlysse created his own deathtrap dungeon to snare the heroes of the world, with the dual purpose of trapping new bodies into which the lich could readily transfer his soul. The Suel lich went so far as to steal a three-part artifact from the cambion tyrant Iuz and planted the pieces throughout his dungeon complex as an added lure for greedy adventurers. After Orlysse's dungeon failed to garner much attention, the lich went mad and began calling himself Keraptis, taking credit for his rival's works. Orlysse's dungeon fell into obscurity until his poems and maps began to surface and heroes learned more about a lost artifact known as the *Infinity Wand* and it purported powers.

Long a scholar of an ancient race called the Torhoon (whose empire, based on alchemy and magic, was centered in Hepmonaland over 8,000 years ago), the mad lich crafted his dungeon on their writings and style. He strove to make the dungeon seem authentically ancient, going so far as to use the ancient Torhoon language in his riddles and fill the place with Torhoon artifacts of his own. In his insanity, he soon came to believe that the dungeon was an ancient Torhoon site, and that he was the sole preserver of the Torhoon legacy.

In 587 CY (four years ago), the dungeon was discovered by a baelnorn (undead elf) named Daetas, who was another scholar in the ways of the Torhoon. Mistaking the dungeon as the lair or design of the true Keraptis and believing that the *Infinity Wand* was a device capable of summoning Keraptis from another dimension, Daetas took it upon himself to keep the *Wand* from falling into anyone's hands. When Orlysse discovered the baelnorn, he left it alone, allowing it to remain in the dungeon as a guardian. He had the foresight, however, to further enchant the dungeon so that the baelnorn could not escape, a fact that Daetas has not yet discovered.

Reaching the "Melted Fane"

The DM can add several encounters and play out the entire journey to the Burning Cliffs or simply state that the journey (depending on the PCs' mode of transit) passes uneventfully. After 2d6 days of searching the western edge of the Burning Cliffs, the PCs stumble upon the remains of an ancient temple, mere yards from the burning landscape.

There is little left of the temple. The few walls that remain standing in the bowl-shaped depression are composed of huge blocks of stone that seem to have eroded into a single, stony mass. Most of the rock has melted and twisted into odd, foreboding shapes that resemble grasping hands and twisted faces. There is no roof, and a light ash covers the ground. Almost one hundred yards east of the fane is an active fumarole that occasionally spews gouts of flame and clouds of ash.

Although the rest of the temple is destroyed (apparently in a great blast), the altar still stands in the middle of the depression. Composed of a solid block of black, unidentifiable rock that seems to suck in light, this travesty is carved with obscene symbols, runes, and warped visages that make one uncomfortable even looking at it. Dried blood is evident under the light coating of ash. The most unnerving thing about the altar is that when one looks away and then back at it, symbols and images on the surface seem to have shifted slightly—leering faces have changed expression, runes are in slightly different positions, and even the altar's shape seems distorted.

The altar is impervious to physical damage and all magical attacks save *disintegrate*. *Stone shape*, *transmute rock to mud*, and similar spells have no effect. The ground encompassed by the temple walls has been enchanted to render the area impervious to *dig*, *earthquake*, and similar spells.

The altar can be slid to one side by a character with 21 Strength or by two or more PCs with a combined Strength of 40. Moving aside the altar reveals a dark flight of spiral steps leading down into darkness. The steps descend 200 feet to area **1** of the dungeon.

The Dungeon

All dungeon corridors, unless otherwise noted, are 10 feet high. Although the corridors seem cut out of the solid rock, close examination proves this isn't the case. The corridors (and those rooms that are not natural caverns) are actually lined with large, black stone blocks over two feet thick that seem to have melted together, forming a solid barrier that is resistant to cutting and heat.

All doors are made of an unknown wood that seems as strong as steel and also resistant to the elements. Due to the strength of these doors, all Open Doors rolls suffer a –2 penalty. Locking mechanisms are rather basic, and thieves suffer no penalties to their Open Locks rolls. A locked or barred door can withstand 100 points of damage before sundering.

The entire dungeon is hot and humid. Several cracks have formed in the walls, and every time the PCs pass one of these heat vents, there is a 1-in-6 chance that hot steam blasts out of the hole. Anyone within five feet of this blast suffers 2d6 points of damage (half if a saving throw vs. breath weapon is successful). PCs benefitting from magical *fire resistance* are impervious to the heat damage.

Orlysse has placed enchantments on the dungeon designed to thwart magic-using PCs and creatures. Any spell or magical item, with the exception of the *plane shift* spell and *astral spell*, that transports something from one place to another simply fails. Orlysse has further enchanted the dungeon with a lingering magic-resistant field that has a 25% chance of negating any spell cast (whether from scroll, spellbook, or memory). Furthermore, this field has a 25% chance of negating the effects of charged magical items such as rods, staves, and wands; each time such a charge is expended, there is a 25% chance that the effect fizzles out, wasting the charge. Other magical items are unaffected. Even creatures native to the dungeon are subject to the magic resistant field.

Although the dungeon and its contents look old and alien, any *know age* or Divination spells used to determine its antiquity reveals that the walls and most denizens are only about twenty years old. Torhoon relics in the dungeon (placed there from Orlysse's collection) are much older, dating back at least 8,000 years.

1. Stairs. Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs descend the stairs:

> Black steps spiral down into infernal darkness. The heat intensifies the deeper you descend.

The stairs are made of the same black rock as the surrounding walls. They are solid and not trapped. The steps descend 200 feet to a 40'-long hallway with two heat vents. The corridor leads north to area **2**.

Once they reach the base of the staircase, those PCs wearing nonmagical metal armor must make a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation every turn or suffer 1d6 points of heat damage; those who are magically resistant to normal heat and fire suffer no damage. PCs wearing magical armor, though uncomfortable, are unhampered.

2. The Statue Speaks.

> The corridor opens into a 30' × 30' room. In the center of the room stands an iron statue of a woman wearing a large, horned helmet. She is holding both of her hands straight up over her head, reaching only three feet below the 12' high ceiling. The statue's features, though human, have an odd, elongated look. The statue's mouth is shaped like a small "o." Something appears to be written on the base of the statue in very small print.

Show players the illustration on page 37. The writing on the base of the statue appears as nothing more than snakelike squiggles. Only a *comprehend languages* spell or similar magic allows the PCs to decipher the ancient, dead language of the Torhoon. Thieves using their Read Languages ability suffer a –30% penalty. The message says, "Listen, and I will speak." The statue is very hot, and anyone touching it with bare flesh suffers 1d4 points of damage.

The statue is a trap. Every 1d6 rounds, steam builds up in the ground under the statue and shoots forth from the statue's mouth, scalding everyone within 10 feet for 3d6 points of damage (save vs. breath weapon for half damage). If anyone is foolish enough to place his ear to the statue's mouth and wait for it to "speak," the blast of steam fires into the unfortunate's ear and inflicts damage (no saving throw) as well as rendering him partially deaf until a *cure deafness* spell is cast. All Dexterity rolls for balance are made at a –2 penalty, and all surprise rolls suffer a –1 penalty until the partial deafness is cured. The statue is an ancient Torhoon artifact but weighs close to 1,000 lbs.

Concealing the exits to the west, north, and east and indistinguishable from the surrounding walls are three stone puddings specially enchanted to guard this room. The puddings completely cover each exit, and their favorite tactic is to wait for someone searching the walls to come to them, then peel back from the top of the wall and "fall" on the victim. The puddings do not leave the room to pursue intruders. If the puddings are not completely destroyed, they magically regenerate in 24 hours, regaining all lost hit points.

Each stone pudding divides into two half-sized puddings, each of them with full hit points, when any of the following spells are cast on them: *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, *flame strike*, *flaming sphere*, *wall of fire*, *chain lightning*, and *incendiary cloud*. These spells do not affect the stone puddings otherwise. They are not harmed by the jets of steam that periodically issue from the central statue.

Stone puddings (3): AC 4; MV 3; HD 5; hp 29, 22, 21; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3d6; SA move on ceiling; SD immune to edged weapons, acid, cold, and poison;

divide when struck by certain spells (see above); MR 30%; SZ L (10' diameter); ML 11; INT low (5); AL NE; XP 1,400; *MCA2*/99.

3. Green Pit. Thirty feet down this corridor the PCs notice a small, iron ring set into the rock of the ceiling. If they move closer to get a better look at the ring or simply continue down the corridor, the 20' long, 9' wide pit trap opens underneath them when at least 100 pounds reaches the middle of it. The pit is 20 feet deep and half-filled with green slime.

Anyone who falls into the pit and isn't quickly pulled out is doomed, as climbing out on one's own is impossible without the aid of magic (a *spider climb* or *levitate* spell, for instance).

The ring over the pit would be perfect to tie a rope to and swing across. Unfortunately, as soon as weight pulls straight down on the ring (that is, as soon as the person swinging is directly over the center of the pit), a mechanism opens the ring and slides it up into the ceiling, letting loose whatever was connected to it. The pit cover remains open for an hour before resetting. During this time, PCs can carefully sidestep the pit along either edge by making a successful Dexterity check; failure indicates the PC has fallen into the pit.

Gargantuan green slime: AC 9; MV 0; HD 20; hp 94; THAC0 1; #AT 0; Dmg nil; SA turns flesh into slime in 1d4 rounds; dissolves platemail in 3 rounds, splint mail and banded mail in 2 rounds, and other metal armor in 1 round; SD immune to weapons and spells (except *cure disease*, which inflicts 2d8 points of damage and reduces the slime by 2 HD); SZ H (2,000 cubic feet); ML 10; INT non (0); AL N; XP 650; *MM*/278.

4. Crossroads Riddle.

> As you come to this intersection, a large, fanged mouth suddenly appears on the floor in front of you. It begins to babble in a language you've never heard before.

This *permanent magic mouth* activates whenever someone comes within 10 feet of the intersection. After it speaks its message once (in the ancient, lost tongue of the Torhoon), it vanishes and does not reappear for 1 turn. If the PCs have the ability to translate the message, they hear the mouth say:

Final pardon, great release,
The long walk after life's surcease;
Left to feed it, right to choose it,
Ahead no mortal soul can lose it.

The answer to the first two lines of the poem is "death," and the poet has been kind enough to tell whomever enters this place how to find it.

5. Deadly Spheres.

> Hanging in mid-air about this room are nine black globes. Each measures roughly two feet across and floats six feet above the floor. Odd, snakelike writing adorns the far wall.

Show players the illustration on page 38. The Torhoon writing on the south wall is too small to read from the doorway and necessitates a *comprehend languages* spell or Ancient Languages proficiency check. The words read simply, "The key lies within the globe." Two rounds after the door is opened, it slowly swings shut and locks (unless held open).

The locked door can be broken down or picked open normally, and a successfully cast *knock* spell can open it as well. However, if the PCs are foolish enough to touch or try to break the globes, they find that each one is actually a *sphere of annihilation*, disintegrating anything that comes in contact with it (no saving throw allowed). The *spheres of annihilation* are immutable and immobile. They cannot be moved or controlled.

6. Flypaper.

> This room appears bare except for a door on the far wall. Hanging on the door's handle is a large brass key.

Another trap, this room seems perfectly normal until one or more PCs step more than 20 feet into the room. At this point, the floor magically changes into an incredibly adhesive substance similar to *sovereign glue*. PCs attempting to move must make a Bend Bars roll to succeed, destroying their footwear unless it makes a successful saving throw vs. crushing blow at a –4 penalty. Those without footwear or whose bare flesh is caught in the substance suffer 2d4 points of damage if they rip their feet from the floor.

Unlike *sovereign glue*, the floor is affected by a simple *grease* spell, which renders the floor harmless within the spell's area of effect. Alcohol of any kind has a similar effect, but pouring water or other liquids onto the adhesive has no effect whatsoever. A *dispel magic* cast against 25th-level magic causes the floor to revert to stone for 1 round, freeing those trapped by the adhesive.

Two rounds after the PCs trigger the "flypaper trap," the northern door opens and three gas spores fly out. They attempt to touch the nearest PCs and infect them with their spores. If a gas spore makes contact with exposed flesh (requiring an attack roll, ignoring Dexterity modifiers to AC for those PCs trapped by the flypaper floor), the spore shoots tiny rhizomes into the victim, after which the gas spore dies. The victim must receive a *cure disease* spell within 24 hours or die, sprouting 2d4 gas spores. Damaging a live gas spore causes it to explode, inflicting 6d6 points of damage to everyone within 20 feet (save vs. wands for half damage).

The brass key hanging from the handle of the northern door opens the secret door in area **9**.

Gas spores (3): AC 9; MV fly 3 (C); HD ½; hp 1 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA deadly spores; SD explode for 6d6 points of damage; SZ M (6' diameter); ML 8; INT non (0); AL N; XP 120; *MM*/121.

7. Spore Maturation Chamber.

> A peculiar odor lingers in this 10' × 20' vestibule, and the northern half of the room is covered in slightly luminescent, orange mold.

Orlysse, using ancient Torhoon alchemy, created this room to grow three new gas spores whenever the previous three are destroyed or killed in area **6**. The growth period is exactly 24 hours; before that time, the newly formed gas spores appear as bulbous "growths" on

the far northern wall until they are fully-grown and detach.

The mold is sensitive to the rhizome exchanges of gas spores and "knows" when they are released, when they explode, or when they die. The mold is otherwise harmless and can be killed by exposure to cold or acid; it is impervious to fire and electricity, however. Scraping the mold off the walls and removing it from the room also kills it.

8. Fallen Elf. The door to this room is locked. Thieves listening at the door can make a Detect Noise roll; if the roll is successful, a soft wailing is heard within.

> This room has been blasted by fire. Small, broken iron rods jut from the walls and ceiling, and black scoring defaces the walls and floor. In the center of the room is a slender, transparent figure huddled over a pile of charred bones and long-burnt flesh. The figure looks up and glares at you.

The figure huddled over the dead body is a banshee—the remnant of one of Orlysse's victims. The creature wails immediately and attacks.

The room was once a potent trap. Upon entering the room, the door would slam shut and seven hundred metal rods (each one foot apart) would pop out from hidden holes in the walls and ceiling and discharge a *lightning bolt* before withdrawing. This trap successfully destroyed a powerful group of adventurers called the Fringe Riders. The potions they carried at the time triggered an explosion that ripped through the room, destroying the rods.

In the center of the room lie the remains of a male human, a male elf, a female elf (the corporeal remains of the banshee), two male dwarves, and a female gnome, all burned beyond recognition. The remains of burnt armor and weapons lie around the pile of bodies. A search of the bodies turns up 390 gp and 112 pp (all partially melted) as well as a *bone ring* (see ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA, page 950) with 36 charges, a *mace/wand of lightning* (see *EM*, page 1486) with 53 charges (command words "sizzle" and "loyal blast"), a suit of gnomish *chainmail +3*, a burnt but intact *scroll of protection from air* (see *EM*, page 1077) in a bone scroll tube, and a *cube of fire resistance*. The cube is a variation of the *cube of frost resistance* and similar in all respects save that it repels fire and heat instead of cold. These items are all that remain of the mighty magic brought into the dungeon by the Fringe Riders. Other items (armor, shields, rings, wands, amulets, and so forth) are strewn near the bodies but are damaged beyond repair.

Banshee: AC 0; MV 15; HD 7; hp 40; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1–8; SA death wail; SD +1 or better weapons to hit, fear; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 16; INT exceptional (16); AL CE; XP 4,000; *MM*/13.

9. Riddle Room.

> The door opens into a room with a 30' high ceiling. Jutting from the walls are several stone perches upon which sit more than a dozen gargoyles, but these sculptures appear deformed or melted. One of the deformed creatures drops from its perch across the room and hobbles toward you, hissing in some ancient tongue.

The gargoyle speaks the Torhoon language. A *comprehend languages* spell or an Ancient Languages proficiency check allows PCs to translate; if the PCs are unable to comprehend the gargoyle, all of the gargoyles leap down to attack.

If the PCs understand the gargoyle, it speaks the following:

> "Answer this riddle correctly, crunchy things, and you will be allowed to pass unharmed. Fail in your answer, and we shall devour you. It has been far too long since we have heard delicious screams. The riddle is thus:
>
> *"Speak the name of our sovereign king,*
> *who from the earth each morn did spring.*
> *Of luminous and resplendent face, two sisters he would oft embrace."*

The answer to this riddle is "Liga" or "the sun." The two sisters referred to in the riddle are the two moons of Oerth: Luna and Celene.

If the PCs answer the riddle correctly, the gargoyles leave them alone. If they fail to provide the correct answer in one round, the gargoyles attack.

If the DM has placed this dungeon in another campaign world, he or she should change the last line of the riddle to reflect that fact, making it "one daughter" for the FORGOTTEN REALMS® campaign (since Toril has one moon) and "three sisters" for the DRAGONLANCE® campaign (since Krynn has three moons). The answer to the riddle should likewise be changed to simply "the sun." DMs running a different campaign world should reword the riddle accordingly.

Two gargoyles drop to the chamber floor per PC while the remaining gargoyles swoop down from above. The gargoyles fight to the death.

Fourteen ledges are positioned about the four walls, varying in height from 10 to 20 feet. Each ledge has a small, nestlike pile of bones, debris, and 1d20+20 gp. In one nest is a small, silver box (empty but worth 70 gp) and a 18"-tall aquamarine statuette of a woman with a lizard's head (worth 2,700 gp intact). The statuette is delicate (saves as glass) and, if broken, is worth one-tenth of its original value.

Set into the west wall is a keyhole. If the brass key from area **6** is inserted into the keyhole, the secret door in the east wall opens. The lock can be picked (–20% penalty to a thief's Open Locks roll), or the door can be opened with a successful *knock* spell.

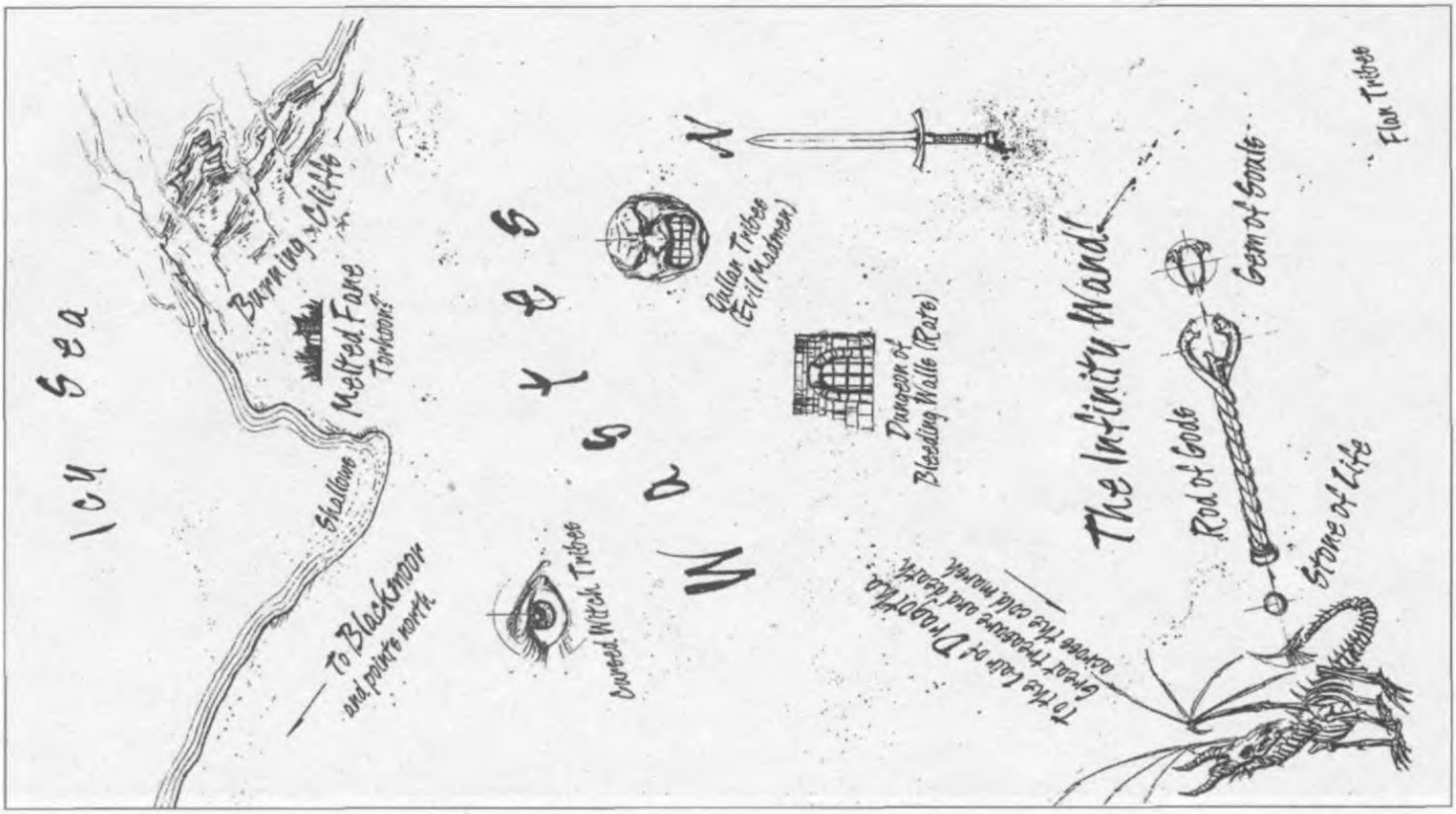
Deformed gargoyles (13): AC 5; MV 9, fly 15 (C); HD 4+4; hp 31, 28 (×2), 24 (×3), 23, 21, 20 (×3), 19, 16; THAC0 15; #AT 4; Dmg 1–3/1–3/1–6/1–4; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; SZ M; ML 11; INT low (6); AL CE; XP 420; *MM*/125.

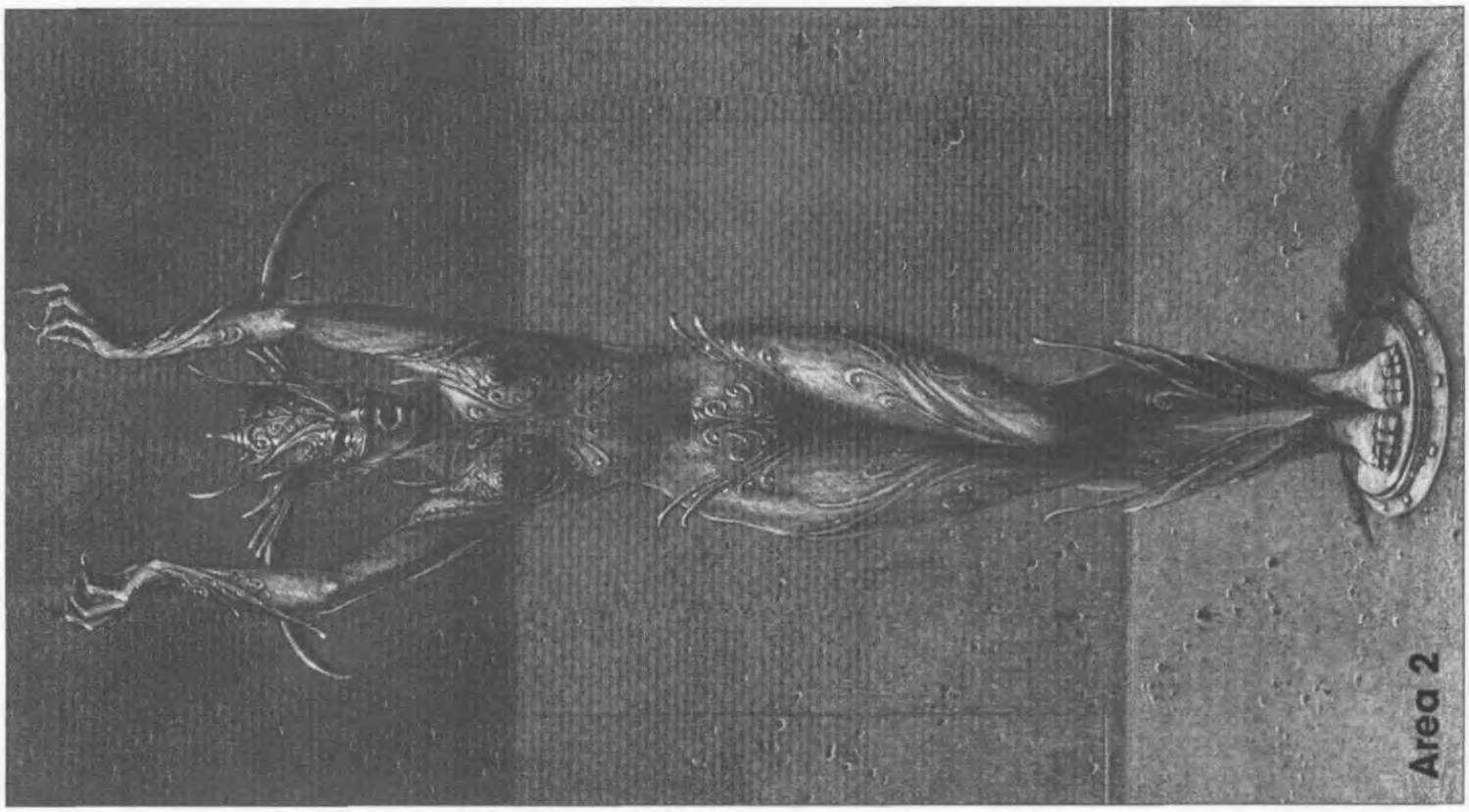
10. Curved Tunnel.

> This 10' diameter, tubelike tunnel has smooth, rounded walls. As it twists and turns, angling downward, you can feel the ambient heat intensify.

The dotted lines on the map indicate where the *walls of stone* spring up if the lava bubble in area **11** is broken.

The 40' section of tunnel that protrudes into the lava cauldron (see area **11**) is measurably hotter than the rest of the tunnel due to the lava outside the tunnel walls; anyone touching these walls with bare flesh suffers 1d8 points of damage.





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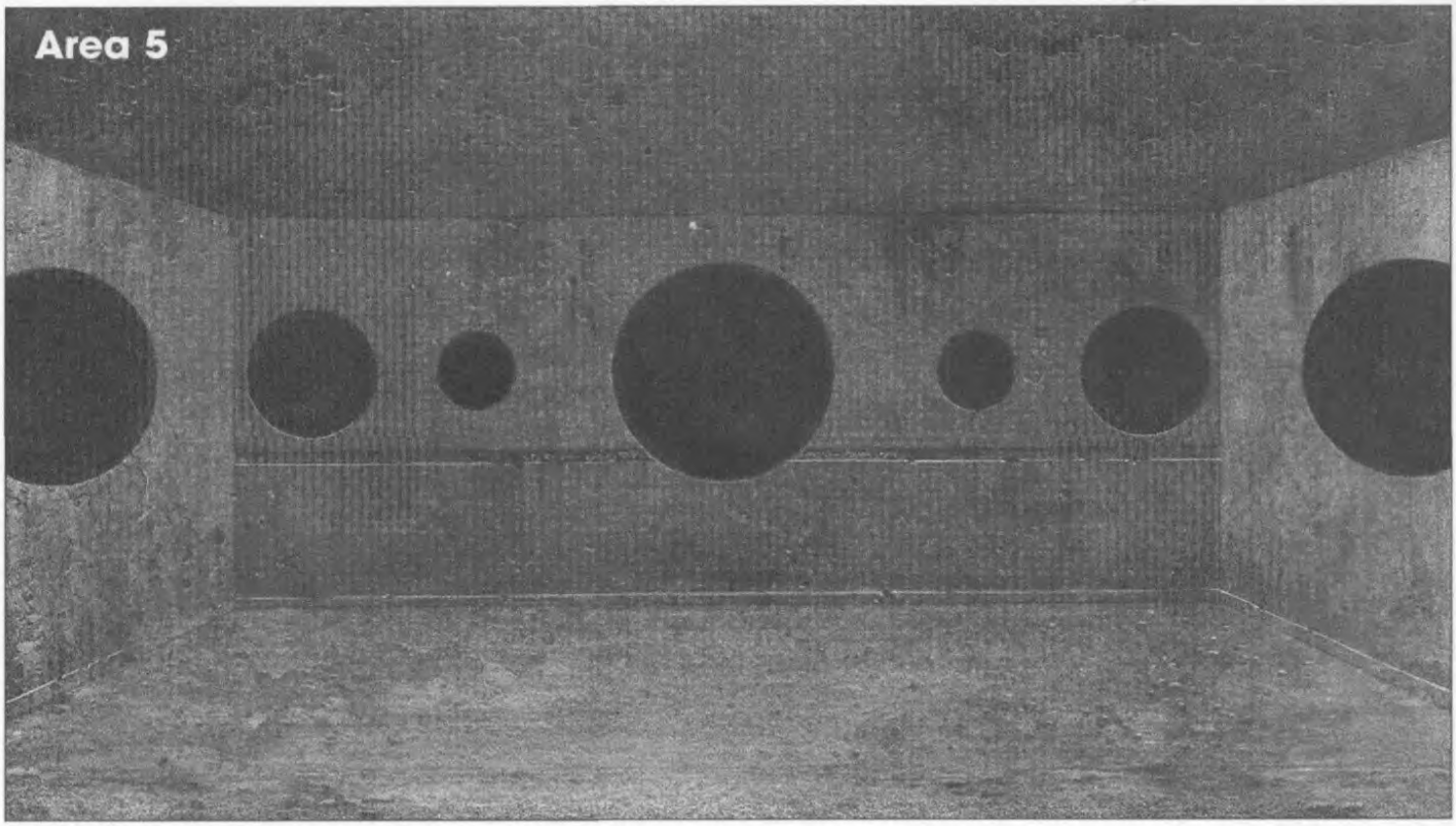

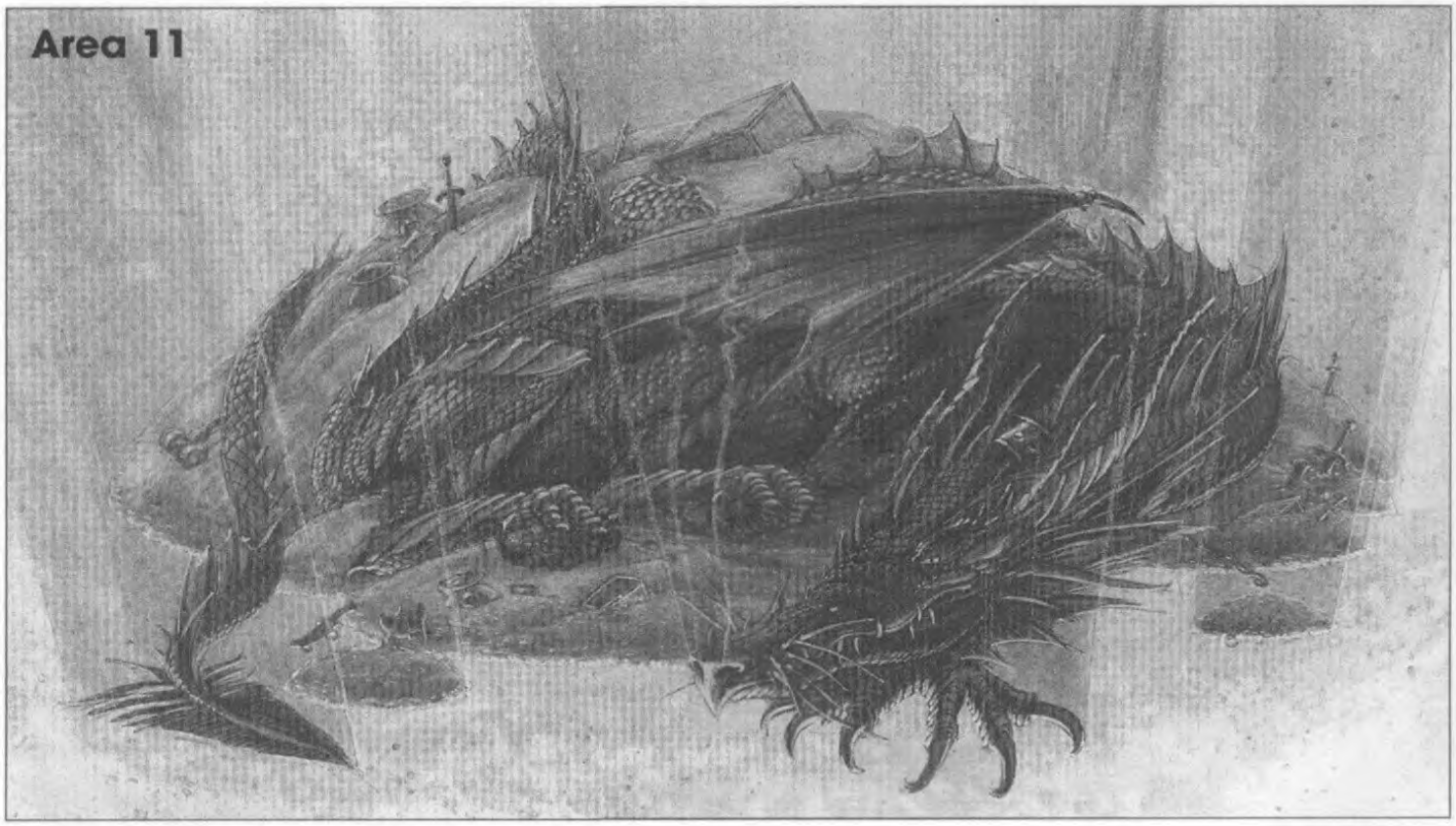

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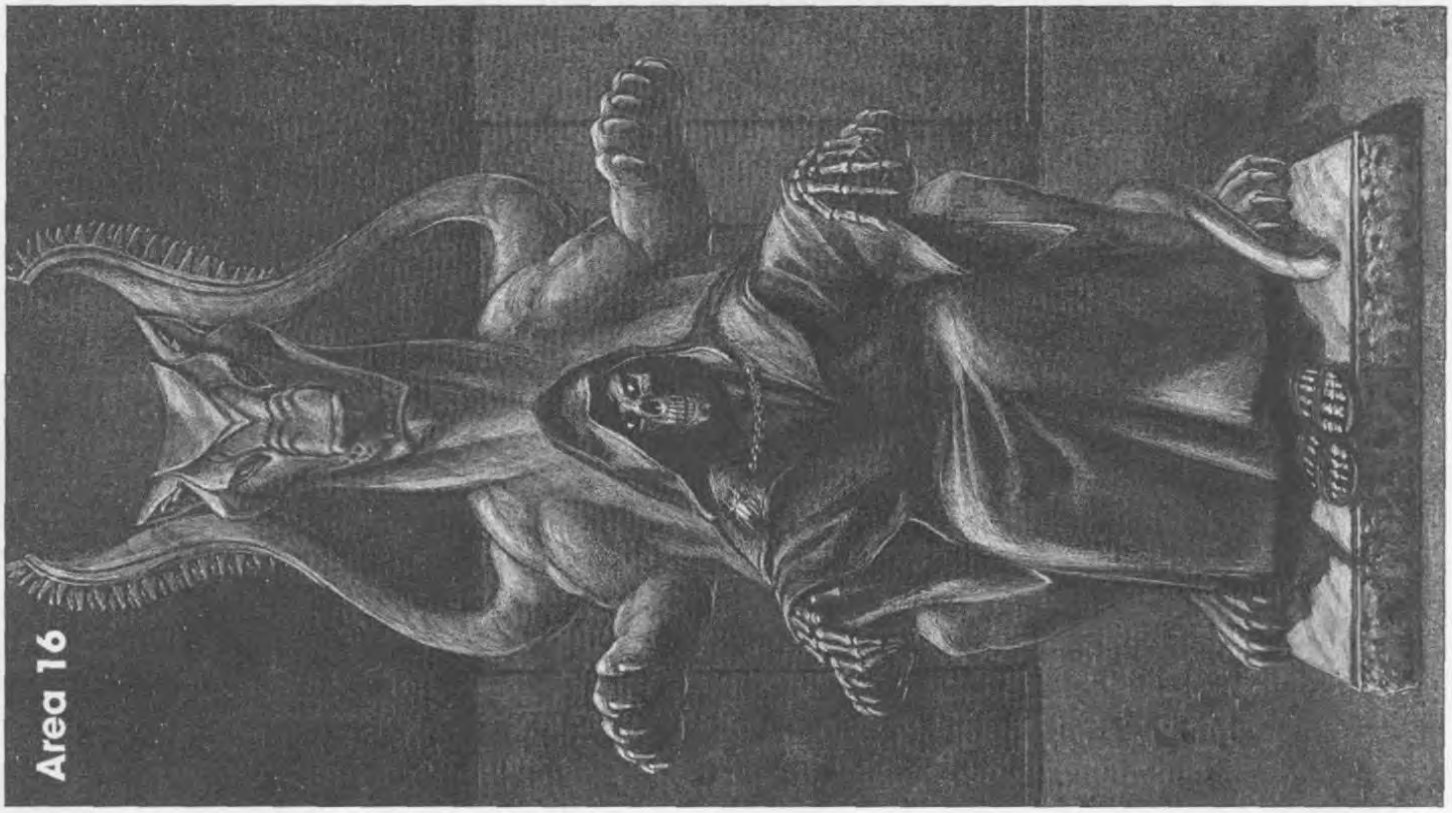

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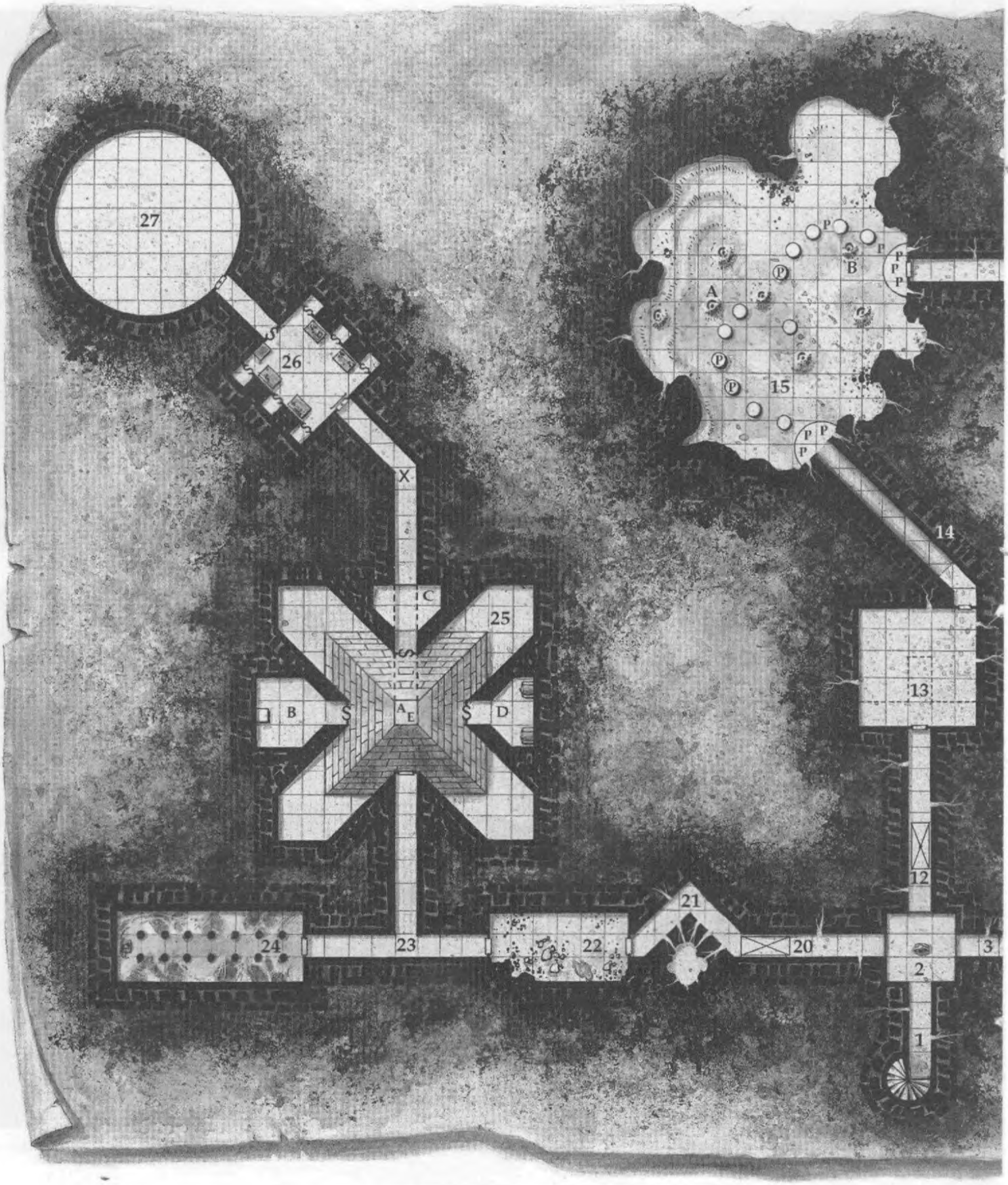
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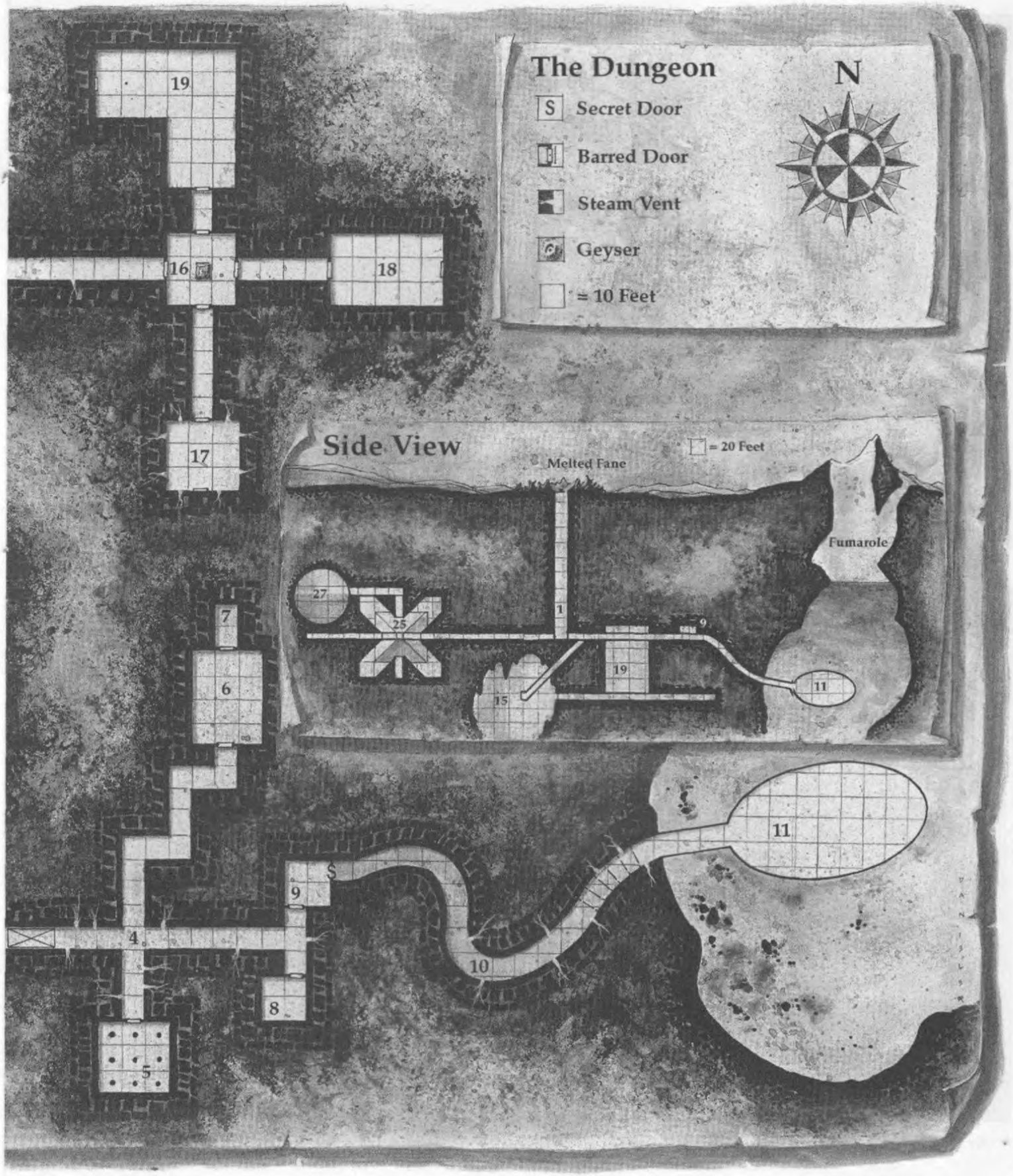
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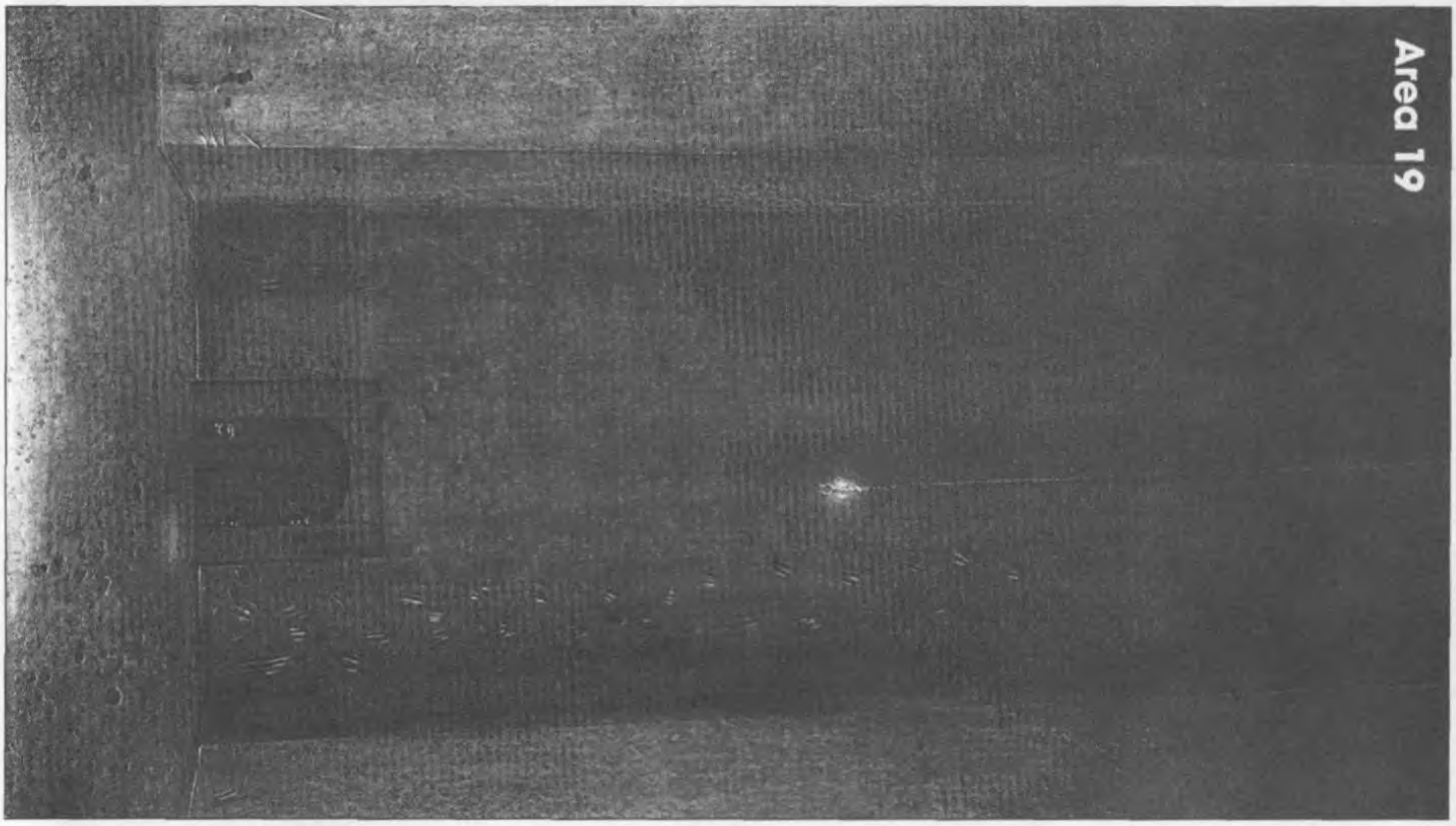

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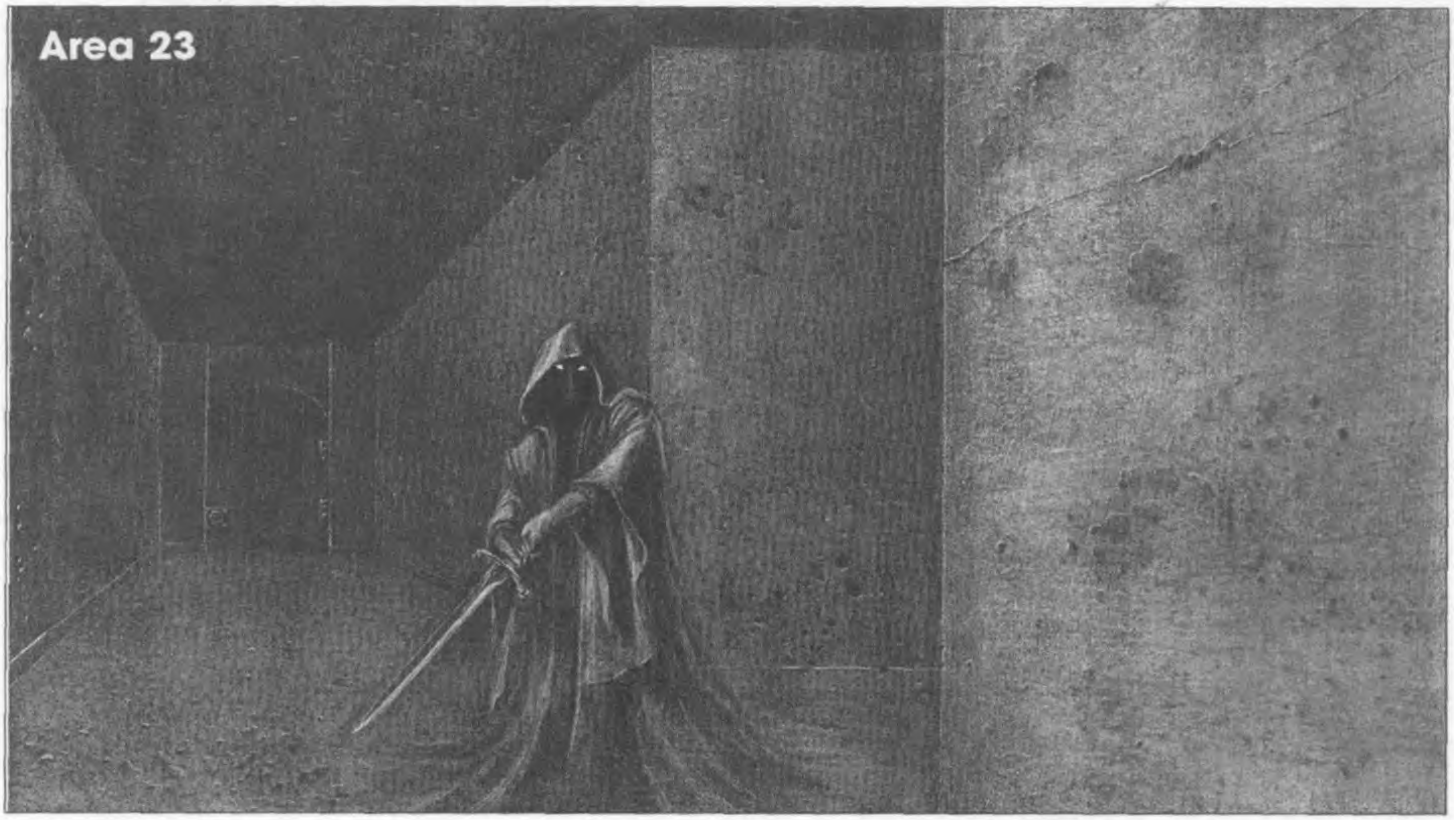

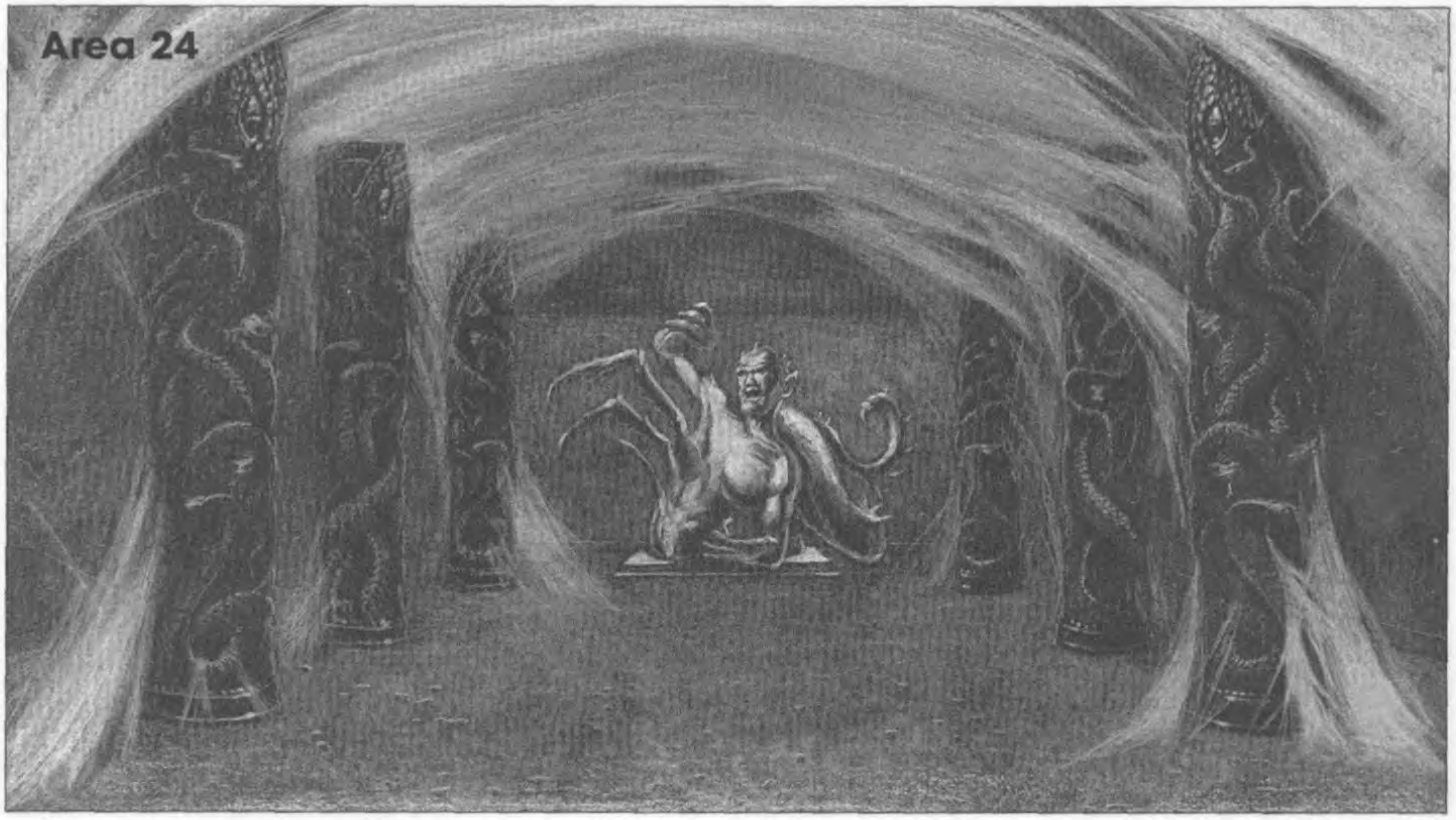

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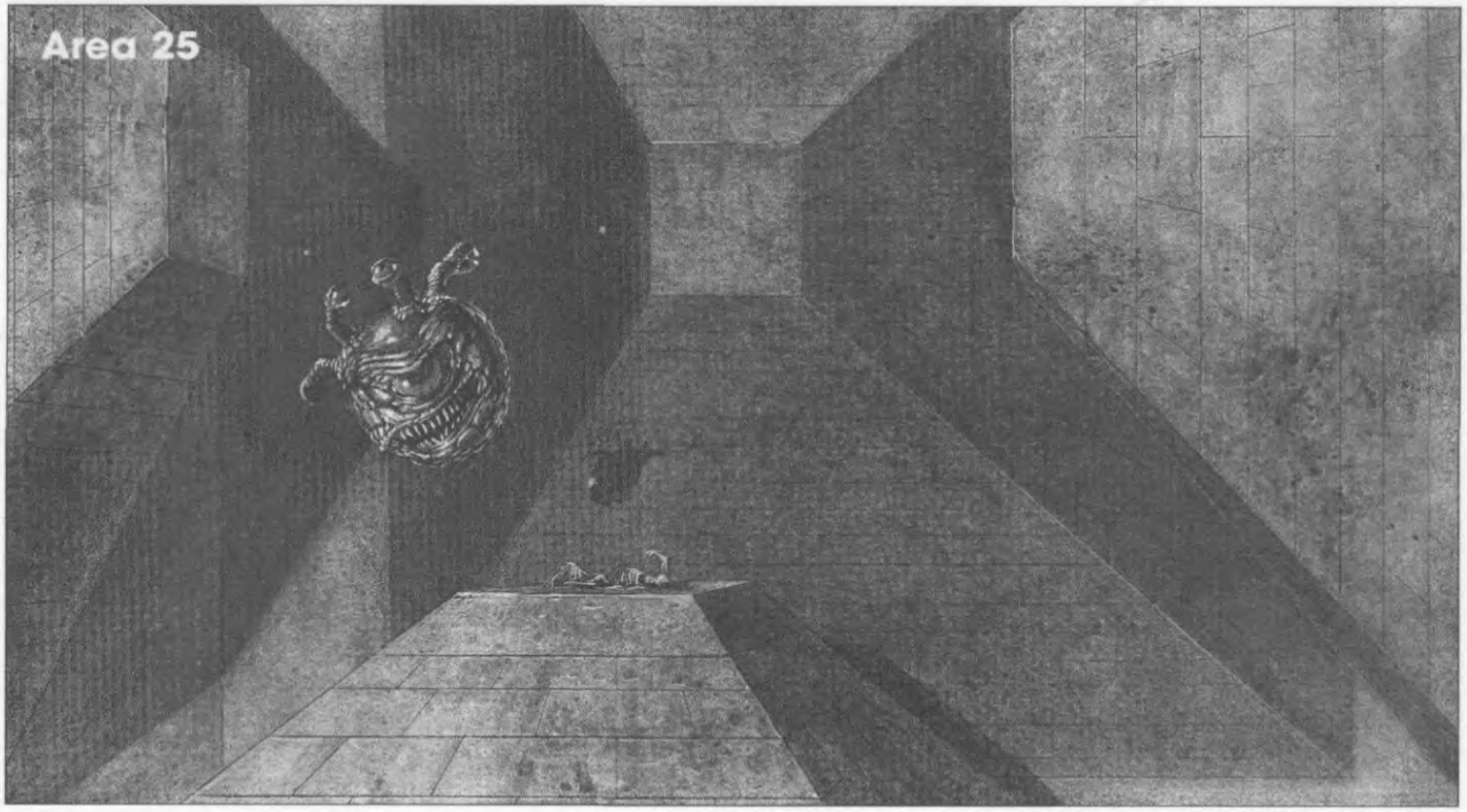

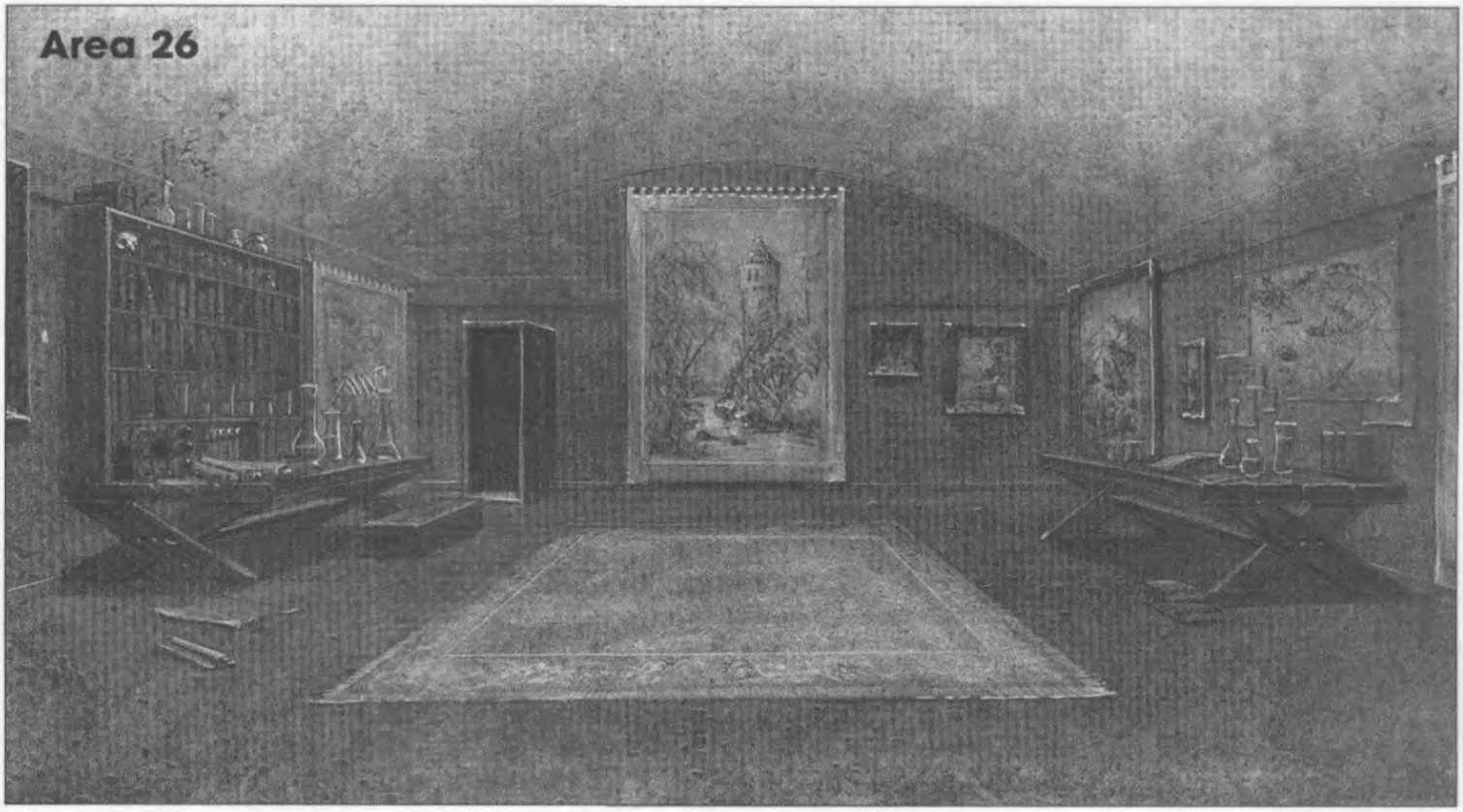

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PCs must take care when navigating the downward-sloping tunnel; anyone moving incautiously down the tunnel must make a successful Dexterity check at –2 or slip and fall, sliding 1d4 × 10 feet toward area **11**.

11. The Beast in the Burning Pit.

> The heat becomes almost unbearable as the tunnel widens into a large, oval chamber with walls of smooth glass. Lava moves sluggishly beyond the glass barrier, suggesting that the chamber is completely immersed.
>
> The floor curves down toward the center of the room, where someone or something has amassed a pile of treasure: coins, gems, weapons, and other trinkets. Sleeping in front of the heap is a large reptile with red scales, black wings, and an unadorned bronze collar around its neck.

Show players the illustration on page 38. The creature in the burning pit is a form of dracolisk long extinct on Oerth. This creature, the result of a mating between a young red dragon and a basilisk, is enjoying a period of hibernation but is quite hungry once aroused. Anyone entering the chamber awakens the beast, which attacks fiercely.

In addition to attacks with its taloned foreclaws and bite, this dracolisk can breathe a cone of fire 45 feet long, 3 feet wide at its mouth, and 15 feet wide at the base once every 3 rounds. The flames inflict 6d6 points of damage, or half if a saving throw vs. breath weapon is successful. The dracolisk's gaze petrifies any opponent within 20 feet if he or she meets the creature's eyes. (PCs who avert their eyes suffer a –4 penalty to attack rolls.) The nictitating membranes on the creature's eyes give it only a 10% chance of being affected by its own gaze.

The bronze collar around the dracolisk's neck sustains the creature without food or water. The collar shrinks in size when held by a human or demihuman, transforming into a *ring of sustenance*. Even though the dracolisk does not require food or water to survive, it never passes up a hearty meal!

Dracolisk: AC 0; MV 9, fly 15 (E); HD 12+3; hp 83; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 1–10/1–10/3–18; SA breathe fire, petrification; SD immune to fire, +2 or better weapons to hit; MR 25%; SZ H (25' long); ML 16; INT average (10); AL CE; XP 12,000; *MM*/14 (modified).

The fireproof "shell" encompassing this area is completely resistant to fire damage but can be shattered by solid blows and destructive spells. Each 10' × 10' section of wall or ceiling can withstand 25 points of damage. A *shatter* spell inflicts 3d6 points of damage, a *shout* spell inflicts 2d6+2 points of damage, a *cone of cold* or *lightning bolt* causes full damage, and a *disintegrate* spell automatically destroys a 10' × 10' section. Although the floor is vulnerable to *disintegrate* spells, *glassteel* spells enable it to withstand other harmful spells as well as support the weight of the dracolisk.

Destroying any section of the glass bubble causes the entire chamber to collapse, filling the room with lava in 1 round. In this event, the six *walls of stone* in area **10** spring into being to protect the rest of the dungeon. PCs who find themselves trapped between the lava and the *walls of stone* are instantly incinerated unless they have magic at their disposal. If the PCs protect themselves inside the *cube of fire resistance* found in area **8**, the cube and its occupants are swept away by the lava, carried up to the surface, and expelled from the lava fumarole east of the dungeon. The *cube of fire resistance* is destroyed as it surfaces; characters must immediately fly, levitate, or climb out of the lava or be seared for 8d10 points of damage per round.

The dracolisk's hoard includes a pile of 3,828 sp and 2,790 gp (the coins at the bottom of the pile are hot to the touch), a fire opal (1,000 gp), five white pearls (100 gp each), 24 bloodstones (50 gp each), a copper necklace set with star rose quartz (600 gp), an ornamental silver mask (250 gp), a belt made of green ceramic plates connected with copper wire (200 gp), an ornamental platinum dagger with a piece of alexandrite in the pommel (600 gp), a helmet gilded with silver and bronze (500 gp), a silver ring with a single set diamond (300 gp), a set of thieves' picks, a beautifully engraved dwarven warhammer (500 gp), a holy symbol dedicated to Celestian made of a disk of jet set with seven moonstones (1,600 gp), a suit of elf-sized *scalemail +4* (cannot be worn until cooled), a *wand of earth and stone* (4 charges remaining), and the *Gem of Souls*. The *gem* is one of three artifacts placed in the dungeon by Orlysse and is fully detailed in "The *Infinity Wand*" sidebar. There are numerous other items in the dracolisk's treasure pile that have been destroyed by the heat, including burnt scrolls, sacks, chests, and clothing. None of these items can be salvaged.

12. Creepy Crawler Pit. As the PCs move down this corridor, they notice a small, iron ring set into the ceiling (identical to area **3**). If one or more PCs cross the pit, it opens, dropping them 20 feet. The fall inflicts 2d6 points of damage, and the pit is inhabited by ten hungry megalocentipedes that attack prey on sight.

The pit's lid closes after 1 round.

The iron ring above the pit cannot support any weight; if pulled, it drops an inch, causing the pit to open (if if hasn't already) and the section of floor south of the pit to tip upward, thrusting PCs standing within 5 feet of the edge into the pit. (The DM may allow PCs standing in this 5' × 10' section to make a saving throw vs. paralyzation to step back in time to avoid falling in the pit.)

On the floor of the pit are the inanimate skeletons of several slain humans and demihumans (elves and gnomes). The megalocentipedes come and go via eight 1' diameter tunnels burrowed into the walls and floor of the pit. The tunnels lead to nowhere else in the dungeon.

Megalocentipedes (10): AC 5; MV 18; HD 3; hp 19, 18, 17 (×2), 16 (×2), 14, 13, 12, 9; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1–3; SA poison (onset time 1d4 rounds; no modifier to saving throws; Dmg Death/2–8); SZ M (5' long); ML 10; INT non (0); AL N; XP 175; *MM*/42.

13. Bridge of Trust.

> The door opens into a large room. The ceiling is lost in the darkness, and the floor is invisible beneath a thick layer of mist ten feet below the door. Set into the far wall, in the northeast corner of the room, is another door.

The floor of this room is actually 40 feet below the doorway, although this

cannot be discerned due to the mist. The T-shaped section of floor protruding from the south wall has been rendered invisible by magic. (The *invisibility* is treated as 25th-level magic for purposes of dispelling.) The first PC to step onto this floor feels its solidity beneath his feet and can actually walk halfway across the room before the floor abruptly ends. Tapping the invisible floor with a pole, sword, or similar item reveals where the floor ends.

PCs falling into the mist disappear from sight and hit the floor below for 4d6 points of damage. The mist is magical and cannot be cleared with *gust of wind* spells. It can be *dispelled*, however. (Treat as 25th-level magic.) Hidden in the mist are six ildriss elemental grues confined to this chamber by Orlysse; the grues attack anyone falling down into the mist, disturbing or *dispelling* the mist, or moving toward the far door. The grues cannot pursue PCs beyond the room's confines.

The ceiling of the room is 60 feet above.

Scattered about the bottom of the pit are several bones and broken bits of armor, weapons, glass, and equipment. Among this refuse are three bloodstones (50 gp each) and a moss agate (10 gp). Also hidden amid the rubbish is an ivory case (30 gp) that holds a potion of *primrose oil* (see *EM*, page 776) and a scroll with *locate object* cast at 10th-level.

Ildriss elemental grues (6): AC 2; MV 3 (as fog), fly 24 (A); HD 4; hp 20, 18 (×2), 17, 15 (×2); THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 3–12; SA attack first each round; SD +2 or better weapons to hit; MR see below; SZ S (3' long); ML 16; INT average (9); AL NE; XP 420; *PLANESCAPE® MCI/52*.

The ildriss grues are impervious to air-based spells such as *lightning bolt, cloudkill, stinking cloud, cone of cold, invisible stalker,* and *wall of fog*. Their presence dispels such magic within 50 feet.

14. The Chute.

The corridor ahead suddenly turns into a round, tubular chute, descending at a 45° angle. The entire tunnel seems to be made of seamless black stone.

Ten feet down the chute, the rock takes on the consistency of polished, frictionless glass. PCs stepping onto the polished floor must make a successful Dexterity check every 10 feet or slip and plummet down the chute, shooting into the air over the floor of area **15**. PCs who try to wedge themselves in the chute or catch themselves before they fly off the edge of the balcony in area **15** must make a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation; only one attempt is possible. Several spells enable PCs to descend the chute safely, including *spider climb, feather fall,* and *fly*. PCs can also use secured ropes and other tools.

15. The Geysers.

The chute opens onto a stone balcony overlooking a large, natural cavern. Steam and vapor swirl around the wet, rocky floor 40 feet below.

Several geysers spray boiling water up into the cavern. Atop most of them are black basalt disks. The disks rise and fall with the geysers. One disk toward the middle of the cavern has fallen off its geyser, which sprays almost to the roof of the cavern.

Show players the illustration on page 39. The cavern ceiling is 100 feet high and lined with smooth stalactites. The balconies overlooking the cavern are 40 feet above the floor and 60 feet below the cavern roof. Anyone falling from the balcony (or propelled from area **14**) suffers 4d6 points of damage from the fall plus another 2d6 points of damage per round from scalding steam.

The stone disks atop the geysers once "floated" at about the same height (40 feet above the cavern floor); over the years, however, the magic that held them in place has weakened, and one disk actually fell from its watery perch, disrupting the entire line. Each stone disk measures 4 feet across and 1 foot thick; they are spaced 6–8 feet from one another. They rise and fall at random, spinning slowly clockwise as they do so. Each is fixed via magic on the geyser that lifts it, although any weight above 500 pounds causes a disk to lose its stability, causing it to fall 50% of the time.

To cross the room, the PCs must either fly or leap from disk to disk. Each leap requires a successful Dexterity check on 4d6; characters with the Jumping proficiency receive a +4 bonus to their checks. Those who fail are allowed a second check at no modifier to catch hold of the disk's edge, but they also suffer 2d6 points of damage from the boiling water splashing from the geyser.

Each disk starts at a random height that changes each round. Whenever a PC tries to jump onto a disk, roll 1d4 for that round: On a roll of 1 or 2, the disk is close enough to jump onto. On a roll of 3, the disk is 10–20 feet above. On a roll of 4, the disk is 10–20 feet below. PCs with the Tumbling proficiency can jump onto a lower disk without sustaining damage by making a successful proficiency check. PCs affected by a *jump* spell or wearing *boots of striding and springing* can leap onto a higher disk with a normal Dexterity check on 4d6, with a +2 bonus if the PC has the Jumping proficiency.

Circumventing the center geyser with the fallen disk is a problem. The cavern is 100 feet high, and the height of the geyser varies round to round; to determine its height in feet during any given round, roll 1d8+2 and multiply the number by ten, giving a height range of 30–100 feet. PCs can wait until the geyser is low before attempting to cross, but the disks on either side of the geyser are nearly 20 feet apart. Bold PCs can "ride the geyser" by leaping into it and using the upward thrust of water and their forward momentum to carry them through the air and onto the next disk. PCs leaping onto the geyser without protection from the scalding water suffer 2d6 points of damage (no saving throw).

The fallen basalt disk remains intact on the cavern floor. The disk is surprisingly light and weighs only 800 pounds. PCs can use a *levitate* spell to lift the disk and set it back upon the geyser.

PCs who can jump 20 feet horizontally may attempt to leap over the geyser and land on the far disk with a successful Dexterity check on 4d6 at a –2 penalty.

Several more geysers are not on the path but shoot forth scalding water every 1d6 rounds. Only two of these are dangerous. The one marked **A** has a 2-in-6 chance of blowing every round; any PCs on the disk closest to this geyser must make another Dexterity check or fall from the disk. The geyser marked **B**

affects the two northernmost disks similarly, except that PCs also suffer 2d6 points of damage from the boiling water.

The cavern's only other danger is the colony of piercers that cling to the roof. They are indicated on the map by the letter **P**. Any PC atop a disk who is struck by a piercer must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or fall from the disk. If the PCs spend enough time in the cavern, the piercers slowly move to where they can drop on them.

Any PC with a *rope of climbing* can lasso a stalactite by making a successful Rope Use proficiency check at a –2 penalty. However, there is a 1-in-10 chance that the "stalactite" is actually a piercer, which drops the instant a PC tries to climb or swing on the *rope*. Any attempt to secure a normal rope around a stalactite or piercer automatically fails, as they are too smooth and slippery.

Piercers (11): AC 3; MV 1; HD 3; hp 21, 17 (×3), 16, 15 (×4), 14, 10; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 3–18; SA surprise; SD immune to normal fire, +1 bonus to saving throws vs. magical fire; SZ M (4' long); ML 9; INT non (0); AL N; XP 175; *MM*/290 (modified). They usually position themselves above the disks or the balconies.

16. Where Undead Sit.

> This room is bare except for an ornate chair sculpted from green marble and carved in the likeness of a rearing displacer beast whose forelimbs form the chair's armrests and whose legs form the chair's base.
>
> Seated within this large throne is a skeletal figure wearing a tattered brown robe, pinned to which is a small silver scarab. Evil light gleams from within the creature's elongated skull as it raises one arm, points at you, and hisses in some obscene language.

Show players the illustration on page 39. The crypt thing speaks ancient Torhoon and points to one of the PCs (chosen randomly). A successful Ancient Languages proficiency check at a –2 penalty or a *comprehend languages* spell is needed to correctly translate the question, which is: "Who was the second scion of the twelfth house of Zyrrinyth?"

The answer to the crypt thing's riddle is "Kellex Zyrrinyth" or "Kellex," an ancient Torhoon sorcerer and despot who lived more than 8,000 years ago. PCs can use a *divination* or *legend lore* spell to find the answer, or they can find the answer in the baelnorn's book of Torhoon culture found in area **26**.

If the PCs answer incorrectly, the crypt thing attacks them with a *wand of magic missiles* embedded in its skeletal forearm, firing two *missiles* per round. The *wand*'s command word, "kraalpok," means "victory" in ancient Torhoon. The crypt thing uses the *wand* until all of its charges are expended before attacking with its claws.

If the PCs answer the riddle correctly, the crypt thing does not attack; it remains seated in the throne and allows PCs to pass safely. The creature cannot otherwise communicate with the PCs and, if attacked, retaliates. It also attacks if the PCs approach within 20 feet of the throne or head toward the doors leading to areas **17–19** without first answering its riddle correctly.

The crypt thing cannot *teleport* PCs, as Orlysse's dungeon negates *teleport* spells. However, the creature has a *scarab of insanity* fastened to its tattered robe. When the crypt thing utters the *scarab*'s command word ("urlaash" in ancient Torhoon, meaning "madness"), all other creatures within a 20' radius must make a saving throw vs. spell with a –2 penalty or be struck mad for 1d4+8 rounds (as per the *confusion* spell, with no chance to act normally or cast spells). The crypt thing uses the *scarab* against PCs who attack it or approach within 20 feet of the throne without answering the riddle.

The throne is magical and displaces itself and anyone seated on it (like a displacer beast). Initial attacks made against the throne or the crypt thing automatically miss, and subsequent attacks are made at a –2 penalty. If the crypt thing rises from the throne to attack with its claws, the displacement effect ends until someone sits in the chair. The throne weighs 800 pounds and has no other powers. The chair's seat has a secret panel in the back that can be opened by manipulating one of the arms. Within the secret compartment are 395 cp, 290 sp, 143 ep, two tiger eye agates (10 gp each), a *buckler* +5 made of adamantite and adorned with a screaming face, and a *footman's mace* +2 with a head shaped like a taloned fist.

Four doors are set into the walls of this 10' high chamber. Characters who heed the third stanza of Orlysse's poem (*"The Wand beyond hot geysers lies, left where the undead sit"*) should head for the door to the *left* of the throne, as seen from the PCs' vantage point (i.e., the door leading to area **19**).

The crypt thing's bones and skull are narrower and heavier that the human norm. Erect, the creature stands 7 feet tall. Its skull has an elongated jaw and fanglike incisors, and its hands are more than 1 foot long each. Orlysse created the crypt thing from the bones of an ancient Torhoon sorcerer and magically treated the bones to make them more resilient.

Torhoon crypt thing: AC 3; MV 12; HD 9; hp 42; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1–8; SA magical items; SD magical weapons to hit, immune to *sleep, charm,* and *hold* spells; cannot be turned; SZ M (7' tall); ML 18; INT very (12); AL N; XP 5,000; *MM*/51 (modified); *wand of magic missiles* (48 charges), *scarab of insanity*.

17. Steam Trap. This unremarkable, 10' high chamber appears bare. Across the room is another door. The walls are riddled with steam vents hidden by a variation of the *vacancy* spell. These fissures in the walls are invisible but detectable by touch and *true seeing* spells.

The false door set in the southern wall opens to reveal a plain stone wall. Opening the door triggers three separate effects: First, a *fire trap* spell cast on the door itself detonates, inflicting 1d4+20 points of damage to anyone within 5 feet of the portal. Second, a *wall of force* blocks the northern doorway, barring passage for 35 rounds. (PCs standing in the doorway have a 50% chance of being knocked into the room.) Third, steam begins to fill the chamber from the hidden vents in the walls, scalding anyone in the chamber. The steam causes 2d4 points of damage each round for 30 rounds, at which time the steam subsides. Characters protected from normal heat are not harmed. Once triggered, the trap remains inactive until "reset" by Orlysse (no sooner than 48 hours after its activation).

PCs can destroy the *wall of force* using a *rod of cancellation* from area **24**, or they can try to *disintegrate* the *wall*. A *stone shape* spell can be used to seal off one of the steam vents, reducing damage per round by 1 point.

18. Slime Children.

> A foul stench pervades this 10' high chamber. Lying in pools of thick, green slime are three rotting bodies. The smallest body is the same size as a dwarf; the other two specimens are almost eight feet tall.

Show players the illustration on page 42. The bodies belong to a derro savant and his half-ogre henchmen who boldly entered this room and were attacked by olive slime. (The derro savant had what he thought was a *scroll of protection from oozes, slimes, and jellies*. However, the scroll's dubious nature was revealed as the olive slime attacked.)

If PCs enter the room to inspect the bodies or investigate the far door, the olive slime creatures rise and attack. They are not afraid to pursue PCs beyond the chamber. When killed, these "zombies" dissolve into new patches of olive slime. If left alone, these patches of slime do not attack.

Olive slime creatures are immune to most attacks (see below), but they are susceptible to *magic missiles*, including those fired from the crypt thing's *wand* in area **16**.

The false door set into the eastern wall opens to reveal a blank wall.

Olive slimes (3): AC 9; MV 0; HD 2+2; hp 10 each; THAC0 19; #AT 0; Dmg nil; SA infestation; SD harmed only by acid, freezing cold, fire, or *cure disease* spells; SZ S; ML 10; INT non (0); AL N; XP 420; *MM*/276.

Olive slime derro: AC 9; MV 6; HD 3+2; hp 15; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1–4; SA infestation; SD immune to all attacks save acid, freezing cold, fire, and *magic missile* spells; SZ S; ML 9; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 420; *MM*/276.

Olive slime half-ogres (2): AC 9; MV 6; HD 8+2; hp 37, 32; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 3–12; SA infestation; SD as above; SZ L; ML 9; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 2,000; *MM*/276.

19. Wand of Stars.

> The ceiling of this L-shaped room is lost in the gloom above. The black walls seem to be full of irregular holes, like some great beast gouged the stonework with its claws. Bits of broken stone are strewn across the floor.

The ceiling of this room is 100 feet above. Where the room turns west, a door is visible in the far wall. If the PCs have a light source to illuminate the area sufficiently, they see a 1' long platinum rod with a pronged end similar to a fork. The "fork" is hanging from a delicate gold chain 40 feet above the floor. (Show players the illustration on page 42.) This is actually the *Wand of Stars*. The *wand* is one of three artifacts placed in the dungeon by Orlysse and is fully detailed in "The *Infinity Wand*" sidebar.

The western door is false, opening to reveal a blank wall. The room is watched by two umber hulk golems (variants of gargoyle golems) that leap down from wide, stone ledges positioned above the two doors, 90 feet above the floor. They attack the instant someone touches or otherwise disturbs the *wand*. The golem above the false door tries to crush one or more PCs as it drops to the floor; the golem above the southern exit uses its considerable bulk to block the room's only escape.

If a golem hits a PC with both claw attacks, the victim must make a saving throw vs. petrification or be turned to stone. The round after a golem succeeds in petrifying an opponent, it crushes the statue with its claws, ignoring other foes. Victims shattered in this manner cannot be restored to life with *stone to flesh* spells.

The umber hulk golems cannot fly. To reach their stony perches, they must scale the walls by digging their claws into the stonework. The golems have no treasure and fight to the death.

The *Wand of Stars* can easily be removed from the clasp on the golden chain suspending it. The chain, crafted by ancient Torhoon magic, is 60 feet long and weighs only 10 pounds. A Strength of 19 is required to break the finely wrought chain, which supports up to 500 pounds of weight.

Umber hulk golems (2): AC 0; MV 9; HD 15; hp 60 each; THAC0 5; #AT 2; Dmg 3–18/3–18; SA petrification, surprise (–2 to opponents' rolls), crushing leap (inflicts 4d10 points of damage if victim is surprised); SD +2 or better weapons to hit; *transmute rock to mud* spell *slows* golem for 2–12 rounds; SZ L (8' tall, 5' wide); ML 20; INT non (0); AL N; XP 14,000; *MM*/169 (variant).

20. The Pudding Pit. Fifty feet down this corridor the PCs notice a small, iron ring set into the ceiling. The ring is solid, secure, and has no purpose other than to serve as a distraction. The real trap lies farther west.

The pit is 8 feet wide, 20 feet deep, and opens when 100 pounds or more is applied. The walls and floor of the pit are made of a Torhoon alloy that is frictionless and impervious to acid. At the bottom of the pit, two black puddings await their next meal. The puddings are held in *temporal stasis* until the pit trap activates. Any PC falling into the pit has a 75% chance of landing on one of the puddings; this negates damage from the fall but inflicts 3d6 points of damage from the pudding's digestive acid. The pit's lid closes after 2 rounds.

Black puddings (2): AC 6; MV 6; HD 10; hp 47, 44; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3–18; SA dissolve metal; SD immune to acid, cold, and poison; lightning divides a pudding into smaller puddings; SZ M (6' diameter); ML 18; INT non (0); AL N; XP 2,000; *MM*/297.

21. Steam Trap. The corridor angles northward, forming a "V" shape before ending at the door leading to area **22**. When the PCs approach within 10 feet of the door, a *programmed illusion* activates. Read the following at this time:

> A tall man suddenly appears in front of you. He is human, although his body is hairless and his features slightly elongated. He wears a loose, black toga and watches you with large, unblinking eyes. He begins to speak in a unrecognizable language.

The illusory Torhoon sorcerer simply states, "Speak the answer to this riddle to proceed safely, else death and vengeance

will follow you." The sorcerer stares at the PCs for a few moments before reciting the riddle:

Fiery release of geyser's breath,
Heat's surcease and boiling death.

The answer to the riddle is "steam," but regardless of the PCs' answer, the sorcerer simple nods and waits.

This whole effect is a trap. This part of the corridor is close to a major steam vent. Two rounds after the illusion speaks its riddle, the hot vapor builds up and sprays out of the nearby vents, inflicting 3d6 points of damage to everyone between the pit (area **20**) and the western door (leading to area **22**). PCs who make a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon suffer half damage. The illusion vanishes once the steam is unleashed; it does not reappear until Orlysse resets the illusion. However, the vents continue to discharge steam at random intervals. (See "The Dungeon" section for details.)

22. Skeletal Snakes.

> The floor of this 20' high chamber is covered with heaps of rubble from the partially collapsed ceiling. Most of the broken ceiling lies strewn in the middle of the floor, leaving paths around either side.

The ceiling didn't actually fall but was brought down by a bone naga during its last altercation with a band of adventurers. The creature appears on top of the central rubble pile as soon as the PCs enter the room, casting its *blur* spell and following up with its *lightning bolt*, *magic missile*, and *flaming sphere* spells. If the naga fails a Morale check, it burrows into the rubble to escape the PCs.

Guarding the northern and southern "paths" around the rubble are two necrophidii, which hide in the rubble. When PCs try to circumvent the rubble, the necrophidii emerge and entrance PCs with their "dance of death."

If the room is searched, the skeletons of a dozen bodies can be found amid the rubble. Most of the bones have been smashed, and among these fragments are some broken weapons and battered pieces of armor. Two nonmagical short swords, a medium shield, a dagger, and a *footman's flail* +2 can be retrieved from the debris.

The bone naga and necrophidii look alike and are virtually indistinguishable until they attack.

Bone naga: AC 6; MV 12; HD 7; hp 35; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg 1–4 (bite)/3–12 (tail sting); SA spells, bite causes loss of 1d4 additional hit points and 1 Strength point (saving throw vs. spells applies); SD immune to *charm, hold, sleep,* poison, cold, and death magic; cannot be turned; SZ L (12' long); ML 19; INT exceptional (16); AL LE; XP 4,000; *MCA1*.

Spells (4/2/2): 1st—*magic missile* (×4); 2nd—*blur, flaming sphere*; 3rd—*lightning bolt* (×2).

Necrophidii (2): AC 2; MV 9; HD 2; hp 10, 6; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1–8; SA *dance of death* (save vs. spell or be *hypnotized* for 3 rounds), bite (save vs. spell or be paralyzed and rendered unconscious for 1d4 turns); SD surprise (–2 penalty to opponents' rolls); cannot be turned; immune to mind-influencing spells; SZ L (12' long); ML 19; INT non (0); AL N; XP 270; *MM*/170.

23. Insubstantial Warning. When this intersection comes within range of the party's light source, read the following:

> Standing at the intersection where the corridor continues west and branches north is a wraithlike image of an elf with white, glowing eyes. The apparition stands almost six feet tall. Clutched in both hands is a shadowy longsword.

Show players the illustration on page 43. This is a *projected image* of the baelnorn in area **26**. This apparition (called a "sending") speaks the Common tongue if most of the PCs are human, but it also speaks Elvish and ancient Torhoon.

The sending says, "*Begone from this place, interlopers. I will not allow you to take what is hidden here or bring back the one who does not belong here. I do not want to cause you harm. Turn back from this foolish quest!*"

The baelnorn is very intelligent and warns PCs not to enter the northern corridor. As long as they heed its wishes, it speaks to them cordially and answers their questions to the best of its ability. The baelnorn, Daetas, claims to be a student of ancient Torhoon culture. Since arriving at the dungeon, he has tasked himself to guard the pieces of the *Infinity Wand* to ensure that its powers cannot be used to summon Keraptis from the "netherworld" (where Daetas believes the former archmage now dwells). Below is a summary of what Daetas knows:

- Keraptis created this dungeon to guard three artifacts which, when combined, form an even greater artifact called the *Infinity Wand*. (Partially true; the dungeon was actually created by the mad Suel lich Zhawar Orlysse.)
- Keraptis stole the *Infinity Wand* from a powerful, evil cambion known as Iuz. (Partially true; Orlysse stole it.)
- The artifacts that comprise the *Infinity Wand* include the *Gem of Souls*, the *Wand of Stars* (A.K.A. *Rod of Gods*), and the *Stone of Life*. The specific powers of these items are unknown. (True)
- Keraptis resides in another dimension. The *Infinity Wand*, once assembled, can be used to summon Keraptis back to the Prime Material Plane. (Partially true; Keraptis is believed to dwell on some other dimension, but the *Wand* cannot be used to summon him.)

The baelnorn's sending won't divulge any more information about itself, the dungeon, or the artifacts. It is impervious to mind-affecting spells and psionics and therefore immune to *ESP* and similar magics. If the baelnorn learns that the PCs have already obtained one or more of the artifacts, the baelnorn commands the PCs to relinquish them. The sending cannot carry solid objects or inflict damage by touch, so it instructs the PCs to leave the artifacts in the corridor and vacate the dungeon. Later, once the PCs have departed, the real baelnorn appears to collect the items.

If the PCs ignore the baelnorn's demands or attempt to explore the corridor leading to area **25**, the baelnorn attacks with its array of spells, casting them through the sending. It first casts *lightning bolt*, then follows up with *finger of death*. Spells cast through the sending are lost from the baelnorn's memory, just as if they were cast by Daetas himself.

The baelnorn suffers half of the damage sustained by the sending; thus, 10 points of damage inflicted upon the

sending also causes 5 points of damage to the baelnorn. After 2 rounds of combat, assuming the PCs haven't fled, the baelnorn mentally commands the sending to "fall back" to area **24**, passing right through the door. For more details on the baelnorn and its spells, refer to area **26**.

Daetas' sending: AC 0; MV fly 9 (A); HD 9+6; hp 60; THAC0 11; #AT 0; Dmg nil; SA spells; SD cannot be turned or dispelled; +1 or better weapons to hit; MR 50%; SZ M (6' tall); ML Special; INT non (0); AL N; XP nil; *MCA1* (baelnorn).

24. Spiders' Lair.

> This hall is lit by the eerie, green glow of several large webs strung between the walls and the pillars. The black basalt pillars are sculpted with serpentine motifs. At the far end of the hall, through the luminous webbing, stands a large yet unidentifiable statue.

Show players the illustration on page 43. If the PCs follow Daetas' sending into this room, the sending is standing in front of the statue, as if guarding it. As the PCs advance toward the middle of the hall, it silently vanishes. At about the same time, eleven wraith-spiders in the room attack from all sides, emerging from behind pillars and the thickest parts of the webs. The wraith-spiders do not pursue PCs beyond the room's confines.

The wraith-spiders' webs can only be cut by silver or magical edged weapons or broken by a successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll. Anyone touching the webs suffers 1d4 points of cold damage and must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or be immobilized for 1d6 rounds, sustaining cold damage each round. Fire burns the webs normally.

Woven into the northwest patch of webs is a bundle of three black steel rods that feel cold to the touch. (The rods have been cooled by the webbing and are not naturally cold.) These are actually *rods of cancellation* left here by Orlysse. Each *rod* can be used once only, after which it disintegrates in the user's hand.

The western statue stands nine feet tall and is quite hideous, depicting a man transforming into some unidentifiable creature. This represents one of the ancient gods worshiped by the Torhoon. The statue is made of an unknown, silvery metal and is extremely cold, causing 1d4 points of damage to bare flesh. The hollow statue weighs 300 pounds but could fetch up to 5,000 gp if safely transported from the dungeon.

Wraith-spiders (11): AC 5; MV 15, web 18; HD 3+2; hp 21, 19, 17 (×2), 16 (×2), 15 (×3), 14, 12; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1–4; SA energy drain, poison bite (drains 1 Constitution point per round for 1d4+1 rounds); SD silver or magical weapons to hit; immune to cold-based attacks, *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold* spells; MR 15%; SZ M; ML 15; INT average (8); AL LE; XP 1,400; *MCA2*/114.

25. Triple-double Pyramid. The door to this room is locked from the inside, and there are neither hinges to remove the door nor keyholes to pick the lock from the outside. PCs may use a *knock* spell to open the door, or they may use brute force; the latter requires a successful Open Doors roll. The door opens *into* the chamber.

Any PC breaking down the door must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or stumble into the empty air beyond, dropping 35 feet to the side of a pyramid rising from the floor below and tumbling to the floor of the room. A PC who falls suffers 3d6 points of damage.

Once the door is opened, PCs may glimpse the room beyond. The following description assumes that the PCs have a light source brighter than a torch (a *continual light* spell, for example) and should be amended otherwise:

> The room beyond is huge, but even more amazing are the large, flat-topped pyramids that protrude from the walls, floor, and ceiling. Each pyramid is 70 feet square, 30 feet high, and made of the same black stone as the rest of the dungeon.
>
> Lying atop the lower pyramid are some skeletal remains jumbled amid some tattered rags.
>
> You suddenly notice movement from above as a large, round creature, 4 feet in diameter and sporting a large central eye and four smaller eyes on stalks, floats down and holds position between the pyramids.

Show players the illustration on page 44. The spectator floats down to a position directly between all six pyramids, keeping its magic-reflecting eye pointed toward the PCs. It uses its *suggestion* eye to telepathically command the PCs to leave and, if attacked, retaliates using all of the powers at its disposal.

The spectator wears a copper ring around one of its eyestalks (Eye #1) that grants it the equivalent of *protection from normal missiles*. The entire room radiates a faint aura of Conjuration magic. The magic of this room automatically summons another spectator when the current guardian is destroyed. A spectator that is blinded or serves faithfully for 101 years *plane shifts* back to Mechanus and is replaced. A destroyed spectator is replaced in 24 hours; the replacement spectators do not have copper rings of *protection from normal missiles*.

The skeletal remains atop the lower pyramid are detailed under area **25A** below.

On the floor of the room, around the base of the lower pyramid, are four stone snakes (one per "side"). These creatures are unable to climb the steep sides of the pyramid but attack anyone falling to the floor (see above).

Spectator: AC 4 (7 for eyes); MV fly 9 (B); HD 4+4; hp 24; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2–5; SA eyes; SD spell reflection (one spell per round), *protection from normal missiles* (granted by ring); MR 5%; SZ M; ML 14; INT high (13); AL LN; XP 4,000; *MM*/21 (beholder).

Eye #1: *Create food and water* for up to six people.

Eye #2: *Cause serious wounds* inflicts 2d8+3 points of damage to a single being within 60 yards (save for half damage).

Eye #3: *Paralyze* one target up to 90 feet away for 8d4 rounds.

Eye #4: Telepathically contact one target within 120 feet and plant a *suggestion* to leave in peace (save negates).

Stone snakes (4): AC –2; MV 9; HD 8; hp 45, 41, 39, 30; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2–20 (jab) or 1–8 (bite); SA poison (save vs. petrification at –6 or slowly turn to stone over 5 rounds); SD edged/piercing weapons inflict one-quarter damage; immune to poison and fire; SZ H (20' long); ML 12; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 2,000; *MCA1*.

The top of each pyramid holds a secret door. Elves and dwarves have a 2-in-6 chance of spotting a secret door; other PC races have a 1-in-6 chance.

25A. Lower Pyramid. The skeletal form lying atop this pyramid belongs to an adventuring mage who managed to get this far before she was killed. Her robe has rotted, and her dagger is pitted with rust. All that remains intact on her person is a black leather bag containing three sealed *glassteel* bottles containing *oil of conquering glory* (see *EM*, page 766), a potion of *merging* (see *EM*, page 879), and a potion of *fire resistance* respectively.

The secret door to this pyramid lies beneath the mage's skeleton, and its stone lid is heavy, requiring a successful Open Doors roll to pull open.

Opening the secret door reveals a 60'-long vertical shaft. Iron rungs are set into the north side of this rectangular shaft, and another door is visible at the bottom, leading to a 30' × 30' × 10' tomb. The tomb is empty except for six wights hidden in niches along the walls. The niches are concealed by *illusionary wall* spells, enabling the wights to remain unseen until they step forth. Unless the PCs have some means to detect the illusions, the wights impose a –3 penalty to the PCs' surprise rolls. Except for the wights, the tomb is empty.

Torhoon wights (6): AC 5; MV 12; HD 4+3; hp 25, 23, 21, 20 (×3); THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1–4; SA energy drain, surprise; SD silver or magical weapons to hit; immune to *sleep, charm, hold*, poison, paralysis, cold, and death magic; SZ M (7' tall); ML 14; INT average (8); AL LE; XP 1,400; *MM*/360.

25B. West Pyramid. This pyramid, built right into the wall, also has a secret door on "top" of it. The PCs might have trouble reaching the secret door without *fly* spells and other magic, since the pyramid's sides are smooth and won't catch a grappling hook. Pulling open the secret door requires a successful Open Doors roll; a *knock* spell also works.

Beyond the secret door is a 10' long corridor opening into a 10' high, 30' deep room. Positioned against the far wall is a 3' tall, unadorned marble plinth with a hand-shaped indentation on top. The plinth radiates magic and is fixed to the floor; it is also impervious to spells that would alter its form, such as *stone shape*.

Placing one's left hand into the indentation atop the plinth triggers a trap. First, the secret door slams shut, catching PCs standing at the entrance unless they make a successful Dexterity check. The secret door is held shut by a *wizard lock* spell and can withstand 100 points of damage (edged weapons inflict only half damage). Second, a *cloudkill* spell fills the chamber and the adjacent corridor, rising as high as the ceiling and persisting for 25 rounds unless *dispelled*. The cloud has no means of escape and cannot be cleared with *gust of wind* spells.

Thieves who inspect the plinth and make a successful Find Traps roll find a secret compartment. The compartment is not trapped and contains four potions of *flying* labeled "ierak" ("fly" in ancient Torhoon). PCs can use these potions to readily access the other pyramids.

25C. North Pyramid. This pyramid, located directly across from the room's entrance, is another trap. The secret door leading into the pyramid is identical to the secret door in area **25B**.

The walls, floor, and ceiling of the short hallway and chamber behind the secret door are polished smooth. When one or more PCs enter the room inside the pyramid, a variation of the *reverse gravity* spell takes effect; PCs not secured immediately "fall" southward (toward the secret entrance), eventually spilling out into the larger room (where gravity remains unchanged). Only the areas inside the pyramid are subject to the *reverse gravity* spell.

A secured PC within range may catch a "falling" PC by making a successful Dexterity check and a successful Strength check. If either roll fails, so does the attempt to catch the falling character.

25D. East Pyramid. The secret door leading into this pyramid is identical to the secret door in area **25B**. The chamber inside the pyramid has a 10' high ceiling.

Twin sarcophagi, their lids carved to resemble Torhoon warriors, stand against the eastern wall. When a living creature enters this tomb, the lids swing open, unleashing the mummies within. The mummies attempt to push the PCs back out through the open entrance.

Embedded inside the torso of each mummy is a glass *temporal stasis* cylinder containing a trapped vampiric mist. If either mummy sustains more than 10 points of damage from a single attack, the cylinder shatters (thus terminating the *temporal stasis* spell) and releases the mist, which seeps from the mummy and attacks the first warm-blooded creature it encounters. Targets of a vampiric mist are treated as AC 10, modified by Dexterity and items that afford magical protection (like *bracers of defense* and *rings of protection*).

Torhoon mummies (2): AC 3; MV 6; HD 6+3; hp 34, 25; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1–12; SA fear, disease; SD harmed only by magical weapons (which inflict half damage); immune to *sleep, charm, hold*, poison, paralysis, cold, and death magic; SZ M (7' tall); ML 15; INT low (7); AL LE; XP 3,000; *MM*/261.

Vampiric mists (2): AC 4 (8 when substantial); MV 12 (6 when substantial); HD 3; hp 17, 14; THAC0 special; #AT 1; Dmg 1–8; SA blood drain; SD magical weapons needed to hit; immune to all magic save *lightning bolt, magic missile*, and air-based spells; SZ M; ML 14; INT average (10); AL NE; XP 270; *MM*/254.

25E. The Upper Pyramid. The pyramid on the roof holds the only true exit from the room. The secret door on this pyramid is identical to the secret door in area **25B**. The secret door closes 10 rounds after it is opened but is easily opened from inside the pyramid.

A 10' wide rectangular shaft set with sturdy iron rungs ascends 40 feet before opening into a corridor leading north toward area **26**.

26. The Baelnorn's Lair. A *silent alarm* spell has been cast on the corridor that leads to this room, at the spot marked "X" on the map. The *alarm* warns the baelnorn that intruders are approaching.

The door to this room is locked. If the PCs manage to bypass the lock or force open the door, read the following:

> Several stone tables, most of them covered with beakers and glassware, stand against the walls on either side of this

15' high vaulted chamber. In the western corner, leaning against the wall, is a black, crystalline box resembling an open, rectangular coffin.

The room is lit by a single globe of light set in the ceiling. The black walls are adorned with brightly colored swaths of leather and cloth. Each of these "paintings" depicts some forest or sylvan scene.

Show players the illustration on page 44. This chamber serves as the baelnorn's laboratory and living space, where he has spent the last decade in self-imposed exile, guarding the *Stone of Life* (one of three artifacts that together comprise the *Infinity Wand*) hidden in area **27**.

The baelnorn, Daetas, stands quietly and invisibly in the northern corner. He has already cast an *invulnerability to magical weapons* on himself. As the PCs enter the room, Daetas casts *feeblemind* on the most powerful PC wizard, becoming visible as the spell goes off. He then casts *domination* on the strongest PC warrior, using his new thrall to protect him from the other PCs. The baelnorn tries to limit the use of spells that could damage his lab but sees the destruction or retreat of the PCs as the highest priority. If Daetas is slain, his body collapses into a heap while his soul transfers into one of six specialized *clones* (see below). The *clone* awakens an hour later, and all of Daetas' hit points are restored. (Spells cast by the baelnorn must still be rememorized.)

The room contains a complete laboratory; however, the glassware is fragile and awkward to transport. Atop one of the tables is an untitled book containing 68 vellum pages bound in red leather. The text is written in ancient Suloise and contains a detailed (if not entirely accurate) account of Torhoon society. From this volume, PCs can learn the answer to the crypt thing's question in area **16**. The book is worth 500 gp to a sage interested in Torhoon history and culture.

The crystal "coffin" has no lid and serves as a place for the baelnorn to "rest" for months at a time. The crystal coffin weighs 400 pounds and is worth 5,000 gp. Hidden in the base of the coffin, within a *wizard locked* secret compartment, is the baelnorn's spellbook.

Daetas' spellbook is made of 50 pages of solid mithral bound by metal staples and covered in adamantite. The spells are etched into the book in a script that requires a *read magic* spell to decipher. Anyone other than the baelnorn who touches the book suffers 20 points of electrical damage (save vs. spell for half damage), although this effect is triggered once only. The book contains all of the baelnorn's memorized spells plus the following: 1st—*conjure spell component*, erase, unseen servant*; 2nd—*battering ram*, charge*, continual light*; 3rd—*acid lash*, material*, protection from fire**; 4th—*everlasting fire*, sphere of eyes*, wizard eye*; 5th—*passwall, silent alarm**; 6th—*antimagic aura*, blade of doom**; 7th—*electric bow**. Spells marked with an asterisk are detailed in the *Wizard's Spell Compendium* and should be replaced with others of equal level if this resource is unavailable.

Each of the two dozen paintings in this room are worth 1d4 × 100 gp, but they are large and bulky. Hidden behind a portrait of a vine-covered tower is a concealed door leading to area **27**.

Hidden behind six secret doors in the room are six specially prepared *clones* of the baelnorn. The *clones* remain lifeless and defenseless until occupied by the baelnorn's spirit. The secret doors can only be found if the walls are carefully searched.

Daetas (baelnorn): AC 0; MV 9; HD 9+6; hp 60; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1–10 or by weapon type; SA spells; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; immune to *charm, sleep, hold, enfeeblement* (including *feeblemind* spells), insanity, cold, electricity, *disintegrate*, and death magic; turned as lich; *project image* 3/day; MR 50%; SZ M (6' tall); ML 20; INT genius (17); AL LN; XP 10,000; *MCA1; longsword* +2.

Spells (6/6/6/6/4/2/1): 1st—*comprehend languages, grease, magic missile* (×2), *read magic, shield*; 2nd—*blindness, detect invisibility, flaming sphere, invisibility* (used), *mirror image, web*; 3rd—*haste, hold person, lightning bolt* (×2), *slow, suggestion*; 4th—*confusion, darkning bolt*, enervation, polymorph other, rainbow pattern, shadow monsters*; 5th—*cloudkill, cone of cold, domination, feeblemind*; 6th—*disintegrate, invulnerability to magical weapons** (used); 7th—*finger of death*.

Daetas has shrivelled black skin and white glowing eyes. An elf in life, he now exists in a lichlike state and dedicates himself to learning more about magic and the Torhoon civilization which, by his account, was a magic-driven society.

27. Hidden in Plain Sight.

This chamber is carved out of solid rock in the shape of a sphere 80 feet in diameter. The door is about halfway up the sphere, and the whole room appears to be half-filled with small, round, metal marbles. Carved into the opposite wall is some writing in large, snakelike lettering.

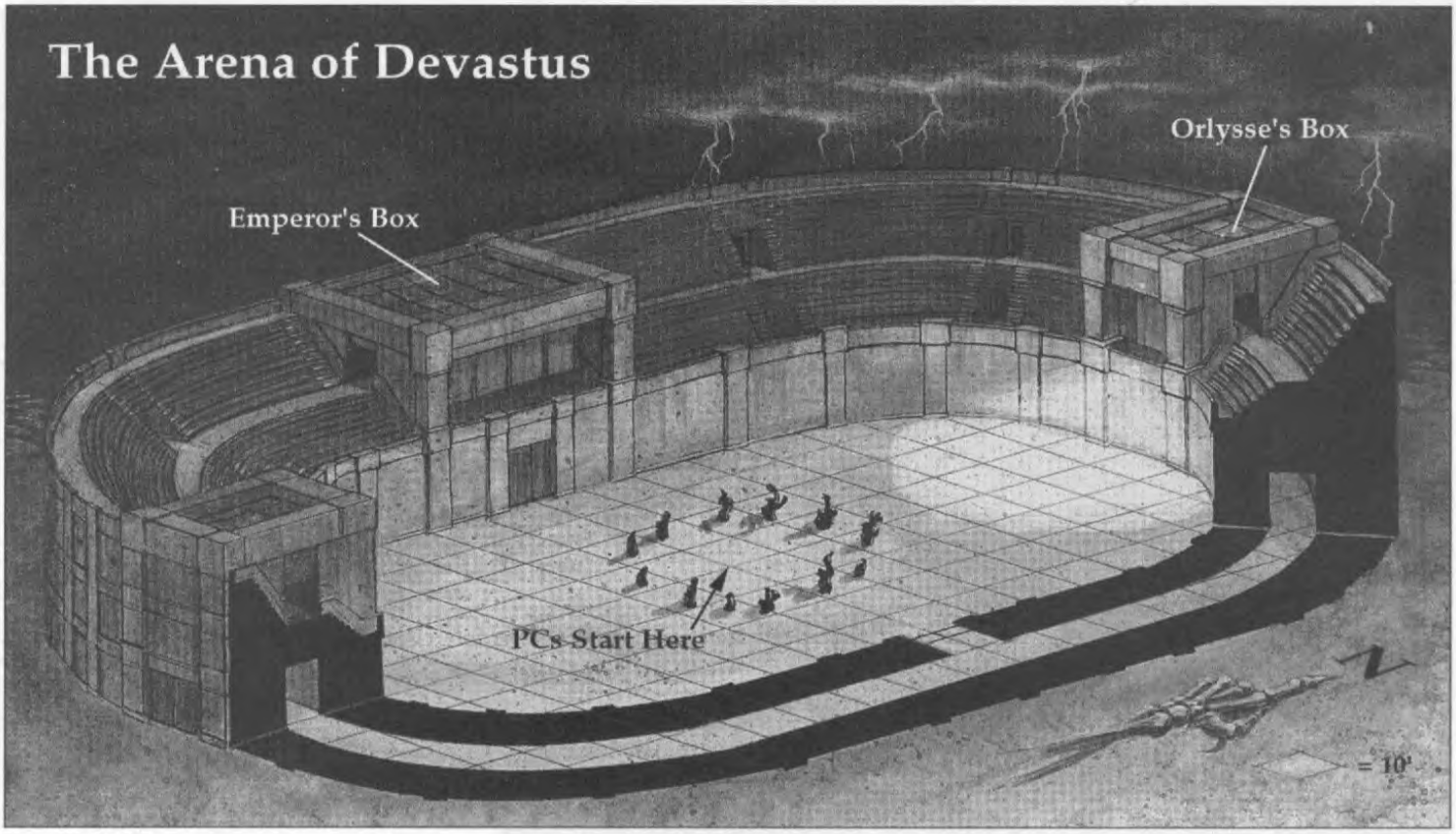
The Torhoon writing on the wall reads, "Hidden in plain sight." Each of the 1"-diameter marbles is enchanted with a *permanent Nystul's magic aura* spell. There are roughly 50 million marbles in the room, completely filling the lower half of the sphere.

Any PC who leaps or falls into the marbles sinks to the bottom of the room in one round and cannot escape without magic, a rope, or similar assistance.

The *Stone of Life* is not among the steel spheres filling the room. The ceiling of the room, starting ten feet above the door, is affected by a *reverse gravity* field. The *stone* rests in a small depression set into the highest point of the ceiling. PCs close enough to see the depression can make an Intelligence check to find the *stone*. PCs may also use a *locate object* spell to find the *Stone of Life*. The *stone* is one of three artifacts placed in the dungeon by Orlysse and is fully detailed in "The *Infinity Wand*" sidebar.

Reconstructing the Artifact

Once the PCs have all three parts of the *Infinity Wand*, they can fit them together. The *Gem of Souls* and *Stone of Life* fit into opposite ends of the *Wand of Stars*, as shown on the PCs' map of the Burning Cliffs. If the PCs touch either the gem or the stone to the appropriate end of the wand, the pieces suddenly meld together, forming a single object. Once the melding takes place, only a *limited wish* or *wish* spell can separate them.



When the *Infinity Wand* is finally assembled, the PCs and all of their possessions (as well as any henchmen and hirelings in their company) are instantly *teleported* by the *Wand* to a demiplane created by Zhawar Orlysse using ancient Torhoon knowledge.

You are hurtled into a netherworld of dizzying lights and scintillating colors. After a few disorienting moments, you arrive in a strange and dark place. The ground beneath your feet has turned to soft sand, and a dark sky studded with unfamiliar stars and wispy clouds looms high overhead.

You're standing in the middle of an arena with 20' high walls visible on all sides. These are topped by steps that ascend another 30 feet. The entire area is lit by a magical globe of light just below a 20' high balcony overlooking the arena floor. Heavy oak doors are set into the various arena walls, but they are sealed. A dozen eroded and unrecognizable statues encircle you, casting ominous shadows.

A cracked voice whispers from the darkened balcony. "At last! You have survived my dungeon and stand before me as slaves. Surrender to the mighty Keraptis, and I shall spare your mortal lives."

Standing on the balcony, hidden by shadow, is a hooded figure. Stepping into view on either side of this figure are two massive creatures with red skin and black horns.

Orlysse's small demiplane, Devastus, is cloaked in perpetual night. Although it was created using lost Torhoon magic, Orlysse could not duplicate all of the spells known to the ancient Torhoon sorcerers. The demiplane, only decades old, has begun to disintegrate and might last another year or two before it collapses back into the Ethereal Plane, at which time the lich must rebuild from scratch.

Orlysse is insane and does not expect or accept surrender. If the PCs agree to surrender, he replies, "No one so bold would yield so quickly. You are trying to deceive me, and I will not be deceived!"

Orlysse's current body is that of an Oeridian necromancer with a closely cropped black beard and long black hair. Orlysse truly believes, in his madness, that he is the one and only Keraptis. Who else could conceive such a brilliant snare to lure heroes to their doom?

If the PCs launch an attack, refuse his offer of surrender, or accuse him of being a false Keraptis, Orlysse screams, "You dare oppose the power of Keraptis? Then perish, mortal fools!" As the PCs ready themselves, Orlysse's shade minions emerge from the shadows of the twelve statues and attack, imposing a –3 penalty to the PCs' surprise rolls. Standing in the shadows, the shades are completely invisible and undetectable. There are ten shade warriors, one shade wizard, and one shade priest. The shades believe that Orlysse is Keraptis.

Warrior shade leader, human male F7: AC 3; MV 15, fly 18 (C); hp 47; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SD special; MR special; SZ M; ML 18; INT average (10); AL LE; XP 7,000; *MCA4/67*; platemail, *two-handed sword +1, wings of flying*.

The *Infinity Wand*

The *Gem of Souls*

This magical item appears as a large, faceted green gemstone. The 1" diameter *gem* resembles an emerald, but the color and consistency are different. The *gem* is set in a platinum fitting with two small mithral studs set on one side. The stone itself glows faintly and feels warm to the touch.

The *Gem of Souls* acts as a *gem of seeing*. Furthermore, if the *gem* is touched to a living being within 1 round after death has occurred, the being's life force is drawn into the *gem* and safely contained until the *gem* is touched to another living being or creature, at which point the life force can enter and occupy the host body provided the being touched fails a saving throw vs. wand. The effect is similar to a *magic jar* spell, with the displaced life force moving into the *gem* until the *gem* is touched to another living being. Regardless of whether the saving throw was successful, the *spirit transfer* power can be used once/week only.

XP Value: 5,000 **GP Value:** 10,000

The *Wand of Stars (Rod of Gods)*

This platinum *wand* measures 12 inches long and one-half inch in diameter. One end of the shaft is fitted with two mithral prongs. The opposite end of the *wand* has a small, cupped indentation.

The *wand* possesses the powers of a *ring of shooting stars* with an unlimited number of charges. However, the *wand* does not function in daylight. Direct sunlight touching any part of the *wand* renders it inert.

The *wand* is activated by pointing it and willing whichever effect the user desires. However, this is not communicated to the wielder when the *wand* is first grasped; *identify, divination,* and *legend lore* spells may be used to learn the *wand*'s powers and the means by which they are activated.

XP Value: 5,000 **GP Value:** 15,000

The *Stone of Life*

This magical item appears to be a simple platinum bead one inch in diameter without ornamentation.

This *stone* enables the user to cast *resurrection* once/week on a single target. The user simply holds the *stone* in one hand and touches the slain being to be *resurrected* with the other. The power is not without cost, however, and each use drains 1 point of Constitution from whoever commands the *stone*. The lost Constitution point can be restored only by a *restoration* or *wish* spell.

Unlike the *Gem of Souls* and *Wand of Stars*, the *Stone of Life* does not radiate magic.

XP Value: 5,000 **GP Value:** 20,000

The Wand Assembled

The platinum prongs on the *Wand of Stars* are designed to hold the *Gem of Souls* in place. The *Stone of Life* fits into the cupped indentation at the other end of the *Wand of Stars*.

Once all three pieces of the artifact are rejoined, they fuse into a single item of tremendous power. The gem at the *wand*'s tip continues to act as a *gem of seeing*. The *wand* has all of the powers of a *ring of shooting stars* and can *resurrect* once/week by touch without any Constitution loss to the wielder. The *wand* can also be wielded in combat, striking as a +3 magical weapon and inflicting 1d6+3 points of damage to size T, S, or M targets and 1d4+3 points of damage to size L, H, or G targets. (The *wand*'s speed factor is 1.) If the *wand* strikes the killing blow against an opponent, the victim must make a saving throw vs. wands (at a –4 penalty) or have its soul sucked into the *gem*, where it remains trapped until the *wand*'s tip touches another creature (the effects of which are detailed under "The *Gem of Souls*" description above).

The fully assembled *Infinity Wand* operates as well in daylight as it does at night.

In addition to the above powers, the fully assembled *Infinity Wand* gains the following powers: *protection from normal missiles* (always active; protects wielder only), *color spray* (5/day), *monster summoning* (1/week; the wielder may choose to cast any of the *monster summoning* spells up to *monster summoning VI*), *teleport without error* (1/week), and *plane shift* (1/week).

Anyone who uses (or tries to use) the assembled *wand* is struck with a minor *curse*, suffering a noncumulative –2 penalty to all saving throws vs. spell, rod, staff, or wand. A *remove curse* spell dispels the *curse* until the *wand* is again employed.

XP Value: 15,000 **GP Value:** 50,000

Warrior shades, human male F4 (9): AC 5; MV 15; hp 32, 30, 27, 25, 20 (×4), 16; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SD special; MR special; SZ M; ML 18; INT average (9); AL LE; XP 4,000; *MCA4/67*; chainmail, broadsword, light crossbow, 20 bolts.

Wizard shade, human female W8: AC 10 or 6 (*armor* spell absorbs 16 points of damage); MV 15; hp 21; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; SA magic; SD special; MR special; SZ M; ML 18; INT exceptional (15); AL LE; XP 10,000; *MCA4/67*; *staff of withering* (15 charges), dagger.

Spells (4/3/3/2): 1st—*armor, burning hands, magic missile, shield*; 2nd—*blindness, Melf's acid arrow, stinking cloud*; 3rd—*fireball, hold person, Melf's minute meteors*; 4th—*Evard's black tentacles, fear*.

Priest shade, human female P6: AC 5; MV 15; hp 24; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; SA magic; SD special; MR special; SZ M; ML 18; INT very (12); AL LE; XP 9,000; *MCA4/67*; chainmail, *morning star +1*.

Spells (5/4/2): 1st—*cause light wounds* (×3), *command, darkness* (×2); 2nd—*heat metal, hold person* (×2), *spiritual hammer*; 3rd—*animate dead, continual light*.

Shades in Twilight

In the shadowy twilight of the arena, the shades gain the following powers:

- +3 bonus to surprise rolls;
- –3 penalty to foes' surprise rolls;
- +3 hp per level;
- +3 to all saving throws, attack rolls, and damage rolls;
- Attack rolls and damage rolls against the shade suffer a –3 penalty (minimum 1 point of damage/die).
- Movement rate of 18;
- Regenerate 3 hp/round;
- Magic resistance of 3% per level;
- Ability to see as clearly as a human in broad daylight (i.e., Hide in Shadows attempts by others automatically fail);
- Use a controlled *blink* every other round, reappearing in another shadowy area within 100 yards;
- Create *shadow images* once/turn (1d4+3 *mirror images* of itself);
- Ability to create *quasi-real images* once/hour, similar to the *demishadow*

monsters spell except 1d4 shade duplicates appear;

☛ *Teleport without error* to any shadowy location on the demiplane.

Heavy Shadows

If the *continual light* source below the balcony is *dispelled* (treat as 25th-level magic) or countered with magical *darkness*, strong shadows fill the arena. This limits a shade's powers as follows:

☛ +2 bonus to surprise rolls;

☛ –2 penalty to foes' surprise rolls;

☛ +1 hp per level;

☛ +1 to all saving throws, attack rolls, and damage rolls;

☛ Attack rolls and damage rolls against the shade suffer a –1 penalty (minimum 1 point of damage/die).

☛ Regenerate 1 hp/round;

☛ Magic resistance of 2% per level;

☛ Acute eyesight, but no ability to see creatures hidden in shadows;

☛ Ability to create *shadow images* once/turn, creating 1d4+3 *mirror images* of itself;

☛ *Invisibility* once/turn for a maximum duration of 1 hour.

Weak Shadows

If the arena is brightly illuminated with extra torches, lanterns, or *continual light* spells, the shades suffer the effects of weak shadows. They retain only their sharp eyesight and a –1 penalty to their opponents' surprise rolls.

No Shadows

If a shade is forced into an area of magical light or thrust into an area of absolute darkness, the shade has half the eyesight of a normal human, suffers a movement rate reduction to 12, loses 2 hp/level, and suffers a –4 saving throw penalty.

Fighting Zhawar Orlysse

Orlysse learned the secret of becoming a Suel lich before the Rain of Colorless Fire. He has taken possession of countless bodies since. His current body once belonged to a former student and thoroughly vile necromancer named Sord Azaphel. (The lich cannot inhabit the body of anyone under 10th level; Sord was 12th level when Orlysse took control of his body.)

Zhawar has a *stoneskin* spell cast on himself that absorbs the first 14 physical attacks against him. Additionally, he can cast *heart of stone* (see *WSC*, page 427) on himself, suffering only 1 point of damage from slashing and piercing weapons and half damage from blunt weapons.

If reduced to 0 hit points, Orlysse emerges from Azaphel's slain body as a sinister, vaguely humanoid cloud of black energy and immediately seeks a new host. While in this form, the lich's spirit is vulnerable to *dispel evil* and *holy word* spells; either spell cast on the lich in this state destroys Orlysse instantly and irrevocably, provided he fails his magic resistance check. In either case, no saving throw is permissible.

Orlysse tries to possess one of the PCs. He can only inhabit PCs of 10th-level or higher, and the lich must find a suitable host within 1 hour or his twisted spirit disperses into nothingness. As a last resort, Orlysse tries to take possession of an efreeti henchman (see below).

Any victim of Orlysse's possession attempt is allowed a saving throw vs. death magic with a –1 penalty to resist. (Victims shielded by a *protection from evil* spell receive a +1 bonus to their saving throw instead.) If the saving throw fails, the victim's spirit is displaced and destroyed; it cannot be *raised, resurrected,* or restored by a *wish* spell.

The red-skinned creatures flanking Orlysse are the lich's loyal efreet henchmen, Brix and Brax. They wield massive scimitars in battle and target aerial PCs and spellcasters first.

If the PCs pose a serious threat, defeating not only the shades but the efreet as well, Orlysse casts a *banishment* spell on them, returning the PCs to the Prime Material Plane.

Zhawar Orlysse (25th-level Suel lich): AC –4; MV 12; hp 90; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA death gaze (affects creatures under 3 HD), touch causes 1d10 points of damage (ignores armor; victim must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or be paralyzed for 24 hours or until dispelled); SD +1 or better weapons to hit; immune to 1st- and 2nd-level spells, mind-affecting spells, and death magic; turned as "special" undead; MR 25%; SZ M; ML 18; XP 20,000; *MCA2/79; bracers of defense AC 2, skullcap +3, ring of protection +3, rod of death* (49 charges; see *EM*, page 1024 for details).

Spells (5/5/5/5/5/5/4/4/3): 1st—*burning hands, color spray, magic missile* (×3); 2nd—*detect invisibility, insatiable thirst*, shadow burst*, spectral hand* (×2); 3rd—*fireball, lightning bolt, scalding spout*, vampiric touch* (×2); 4th—*confusion, dimension door, enervation, fire shield, improved invisibility;* 5th—*feeblemind, flame cone* (variant of *cone of cold*), *telekinesis, teleport* (×2); 6th—*chain lightning, disintegrate, eyebite, project image, true seeing;* 7th—*banishment, finger of death, power word stun, spell turning;* 8th—*heart of stone*, incendiary cloud, power word blind, Serten's spell immunity;* 9th—*crystalbrittle, energy drain, meteor storm.*

Zhawar suffers a –2 penalty to saving throws vs. magic as a result of his prior contact with the *Infinity Wand*.

Brix and **Brax** (efreet): AC 2; MV 9, fly 24 (B); HD 10; hp 52, 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3–24; SA spells; SD immune to normal fire; magical fire attacks suffer –1 penalties to attack and damage rolls; SZ L (12' tall); ML 16; INT very (12); AL LE; XP 8,000; *MM*/127; huge scimitar.

Spells: *invisibility* 1/day, assume *gaseous form* 1/day, *detect magic* 1/day, *enlarge* 1/day, *polymorph self* 1/day, *wall of fire* 1/day, *create illusion* (with visual and audio components; lasts until *dispelled* or touched) 1/day, *produce flame* (at will), *pyrotechnics* (at will).

The efreet wear spiked iron bracers, iron belts, and colorful pantaloons. Their scimitars each weigh 200 pounds. If Orlysse is slain or driven off and the efreet are hard-pressed, they bargain for their lives by agreeing to grant *wishes* to the PCs. Each efreeti has the power to grant three *wishes*, within the limits of the spell as defined in the *PH*. The efreet are lawful and therefore bound by their word, but they cleverly twist the PCs' words to pervert the *wishes* however possible. PCs can use these *wishes* to raise fallen comrades or return to Oerth. In general, a *wish* can be used to duplicate the effect of any other spell, although the DM may enforce further limits to preserve game balance.

The Demiplane of Devastus

The rest of Orlysse's demiplane is a barren, sandy wasteland devoid of life and dotted with black obelisks, skeletons of dragons and other enormous creatures, and gaping fissures where the demiplane has fallen away into the Border Ethereal. (For more information on the Border Ethereal and the Ethereal Plane, refer to *A Guide to the Ethereal Plane*.) PCs may explore the demiplane as they see fit, but there are few if any places to hide outside the Arena.

There are several ways to escape the lich's demiplane:

☛ The obelisks scattered throughout the demiplane were Orlysse's early attempts to create fixed *gates* to other planes. Carved into each obelisk is a magical rune. When traced, there's a 10% chance that the rune activates a *gate* leading back to Oerth or to some other plane of the DM's choosing. The *gate*, which appears 2d6+10 feet from the obelisk, remains open for 1d6+2 rounds. Once it collapses, the *gate* cannot be reactivated. Presently, all of the functional *gates* are one-way only; they do not allow passage back to Devastus. (If defeated soundly, Orlysse might use one of these *gates* to flee the demiplane.)

☛ The PCs can use the *teleport without error* function of the *Infinity Wand* to leave Devastus and return to their home plane. Unfortunately, the *teleport without error* power which brought the PCs to the demiplane in the first place cannot be used again for 1 week. PCs are free to remain in Devastus, although there is neither food nor water available anywhere on the demiplane.

☛ PCs may employ their own magic (or a carefully worded *wish* bestowed by the efreet) to return to Oerth. Unlike Orlysse's dungeon, the demiplane in no way inhibits spellcasting. Transportative magic functions normally.

Concluding the Adventure

Zhawar Orlysse goes out of his way to ruin the PCs' lives if they defeated him, destroyed his present body, or managed to escape with the *Infinity Wand*. The PCs are attacked, ambushed, or led into traps every three months or so. He becomes a recurring villain and should be a constant thorn in the PCs' sides.

If the PCs were soundly defeated by Orlysse, they are imprisoned in the lich's secret lair on the Flanaess. Those who were slain in battle are *resurrected* by the lich (using the *Infinity Wand*) and incarcerated as well. When the body Orlysse presently occupies burns out in a decade or so (sooner at the whim of the DM), one of the captured PCs is chosen to become his new host. Until that time, they are well-treated and cared for, if prohibited from leaving or gaining power. The PCs may try to escape, but if they are slain in the process, Orlysse does not *resurrect* them. The cells designed to hold the PCs are well-built and magic resistant. The exact layout of the lich's lair is left to the DM.

If the DM wishes, this adventure can be connected to either S2: *White Plume Mountain* or *Return to White Plume Mountain*. PCs intrigued by the Torhoon find that the race is unknown to most scholars. Their empire was far to the south of the Flanaess, and the PCs might find their way there through the *gates* on Devastus. Regardless where the PCs go, Orlysse (if he hasn't been destroyed) eventually finds them and exacts his revenge. Ω

Three were taken, three I'll keep
From the fiend who rules the north;
Stolen far and hidden deep
In lands where fire issues forth.

Seek ye there the melted fane
Standing west of fiery stack;
Beneath the god of blood and pain,
Bravely step and don't look back.

The Gem is held with stony eyes
By the beast in the burning pit;
The Wand beyond hot geysers lies
Left where the undead sit.

The magic Stone you've yet to find
In tripled-double pyramid;
All three fixed, and you are mine
To serve or perish, as I bid.

I care not, mortal king or fool,
What heroes you deign to send;
As slaves they'll heed my darkest rule
Or meet their fiery end.

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SIDE TREKS

BY OLIVER GARBSCH

Artwork and Cartography by Stephen Daniele

"Stage Fright" is an AD&D® Side Trek adventure for 3–5 characters of levels 1–3 (about 8 total levels). The adventure takes place in a popular theater located at the edge of an entertainment district in a city of the DM's choosing. The PCs learn that the theater's latest production is among the best in the city. The PCs' night on the town turns out, however, to be more than just a hot ticket.

One of the PCs should be a wizard, as the rewards for completing the adventure are geared toward this class. Most or all of the PCs should be good-aligned.

Adventure Background

Three months prior to the PCs' night on the town, the Midnight Theater held a one-night-only engagement called *The Summoner*, a dark tale about a merciless sorcerer and his lust for revenge against his family who abandoned him at birth because of his abnormal appearance. The owner of the theater, Kieran Mists, produced, directed, and played the lead role in all of his plays. Bards in the city considered his work brilliant and cutting edge. Kieran Mists was an 8th-level illusionist, but few knew this. The idea for *The Summoner* came to him after he purchased a script that turned out to be an *ensnarement* spell hidden by *illusionary script*. He planned to use the *ensnarement* spell to summon a genuine monster as the showpiece for the climactic finale of the play.

Kieran consulted a sage to find the best creature to summon for his play. The creature had to be voracious and loud, but dim-witted and controllable. He concluded that a red slaad would best fit the plot of his screenplay. Kieran hired a fellow guild member (a 7th-level conjurer) to create the hand-drawn magic circle that would dominate the middle of the stage. The conjurer would be offstage casting *ensnarement* and *ventriloquism* to make Kieran sound like he was casting the spell. The slaad would remain in the circle during the fight and be directed by the conjurer to do nothing but glare and roar at the crowd until it was told to return home. The hero would arrive to witness the summoning and defeat Kieran in a fantastic magical battle created with *spectral force*. The hero would use the last of his magical energies to send the creature back to its own world before dramatically collapsing on stage to end the play.

Kieran advertised for months prior to the debut of *The Summoner*. He and his troupe of actors did not disappoint. The slaad's appearance on stage nearly overwhelmed the frightened audience. The *ensnarement* worked until the slaad realized that the magic circle had been compromised by one of the on-stage actors. Enraged and disoriented, it leapt from the circle, killing every actor on the stage including the overmatched conjurer. Kieran was struck by the creature and flung into the seats. With the crowd screaming and bursting through the exits, the creature gorged itself on the fresh corpses before returning through the portal created by the *ensnarement* spell.

Kieran survived. His theater was closed for a time pending investigation by the city watch. Then Kieran got sick. He had been injected with the egg pellet of the red slaad but did not know the cause of his illness. His affliction made him incredibly hungry, and over the next three months his weight doubled. The baby slaad growing inside of him was devouring Kieran's life energy, starving him. He sought aid from the local clergy, but their ministrations failed.

The city leveled a crippling fine on Kieran and barred him from creating

STAGE FRIGHT

any new productions within city limits. Kieran became desperate.

Two months after the theater held its last performance, Kieran decided to open the theater again. He hired a new theater director and tried to resurrect the theater as its silent backer. The first shows were dismal failures. His new play, *The Feast of Gourmand*, is a story about vampires and their obsessions with things they no longer share with the living. The plot is tame and the effects subdued. Kieran hopes people will reacquaint themselves with the theater and save him from financial ruin. A month has passed, and the PCs are now standing in line to see the show.

The Midnight Theater

The theater is a tall, one-story structure with a basement. The wooden seats are arranged in a semi-circular pattern around the stage and music pit. The seats slope downward to allow a better view of the stage. The seating area and the stage are supported by a series of posts and beams set into the earthen foundation of the building. The area behind the stage has the actor's preparation areas, a small office, and a set of stairs leading to the basement.

The basement has an earthen floor and is piled high with a maze of crates, racks of costumes, and boxes of theatrical odds and ends. The posts that support the upper floor are visible here. Slivers of light shine through cracks in the ceiling, filling the basement with shadows. In one corner of the basement, ground water leaks through the foundation wall, forming a small pool. Rats congregate around this site, foraging for bits of food that fall through the cracks in the ceiling during performances.

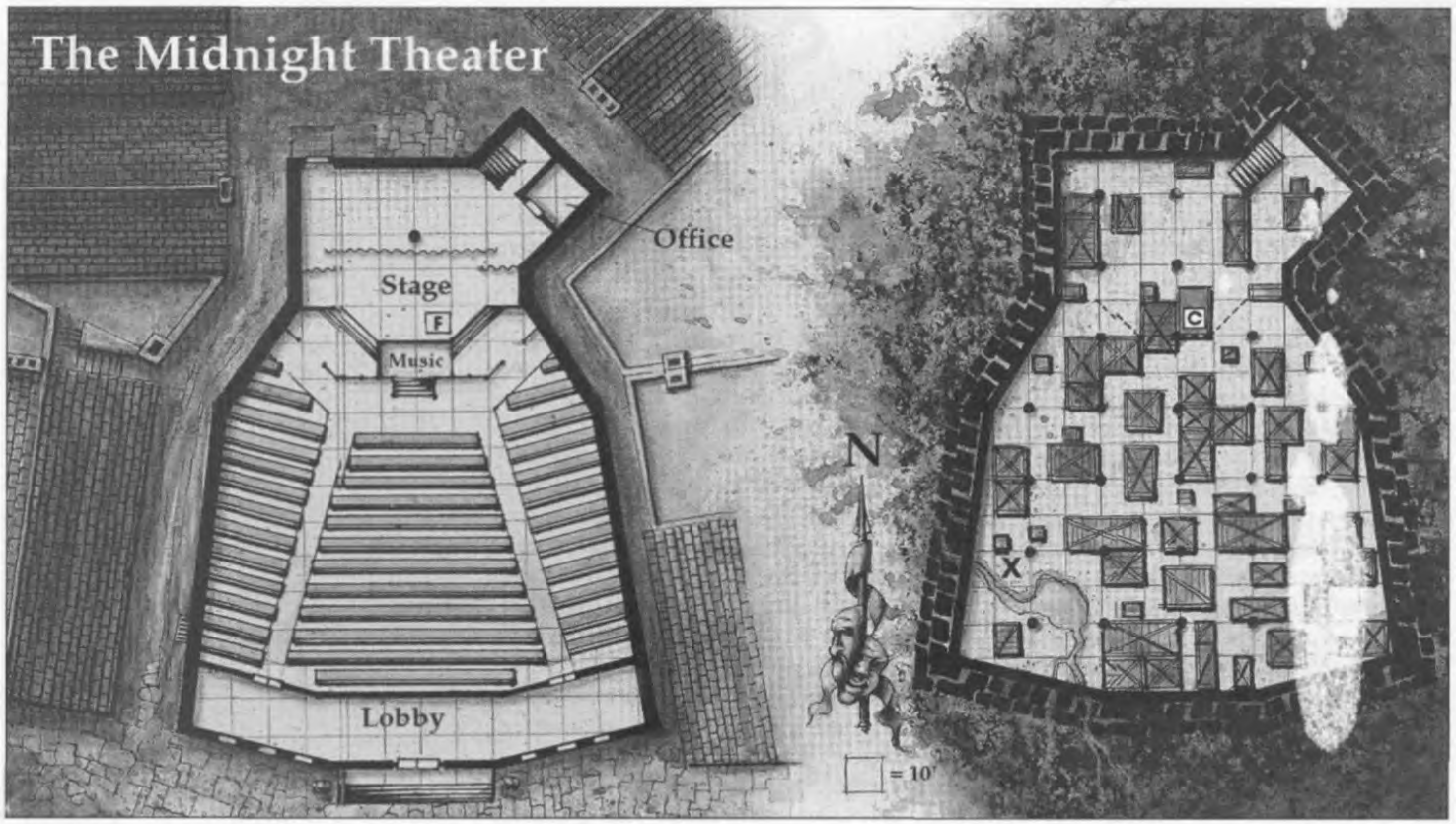
Beginning the Adventure

Explain to the PCs that they are gearing up for a night on the town. This could involve tavern hopping or street entertainment. The DM is encouraged to role-play the good times leading up to the start of the evening to set the tone. The dressed-up PCs eventually arrive at the Midnight Theater and get in line under a starlit sky. The PCs might have received the tickets for the show from a grateful NPC they helped on a previous adventure. Alternatively, the DM could explain that the tickets were given to the PCs to cover a gambling debt or by the director of a rival theater interested in learning some of Kieran's secrets. The PCs have heard the recent stories surrounding the theater over the course of the evening. The DM should paraphrase the events of *The Summoner*, including rumors of Kieran's disappearance, but be careful not reveal specific information about the slaad or the magic involved in creating the play.

The PCs are seated in the back row in the center of the theater. The growing crowd is restless and talkative. Ushers seat the remaining standing individuals, and the play begins. The sets are strikingly real and change completely after a few moments of darkness between acts.

The story unravels. Gourmand is the hero. He is sickly pale and grossly overweight. Throughout the entire play he eats from a heaping food platter and drinks from a goblet filled with blood. His attempts to seduce women and conquer men end in tragic failure with every sunrise. The crowd becomes sympathetic and emotional at times. The violence of Gourmand's feedings is subtle and even poetic. PCs find themselves getting caught up in the passion of the story when the following event occurs on center stage. Read the following boxed text to the players:

> Gourmand the vampire lifts his bulbous head up from the throat of the twitching body of his latest victim, Lady Sorrow. Tears stream down his pale face into his blood-lined mouth. Gourmand's fangs glisten in the glare of the spotlight. He looks up angrily at the moon hanging off to the left side of the stage and coughs, somewhat unexpectedly. Gourmand begins a solemn monologue as flickering torches begin to light the stage, revealing the alleyway and the refuse surrounding him. Villagers carry the torches closer, and a priest raises his holy symbol with a trembling hand. They surround Gourmand as he speaks to the heavens, oblivious to their presence. The priest begins to castigate the vampire. The villagers quake in fear behind him. Gourmand laughs and strides toward the priest, who backs away, his voice trailing off into a whisper.
>
> Gourmand begins to speak, then falls to his knees, clutching at his stomach. The priest and the villagers are startled. Gourmand rolls onto his back and screams horribly, pulling at his clothes. The villagers step back, and the priest cautiously approaches holding the holy symbol in his outstretched hands. The priest looks confused. He glances back at the villagers, one of whom inadvertently shrugs his shoulders. Gourmand begins to spasm, and his shrieks disrupt the dramatic music rising up from the pit. His shirt rips open, exposing an undulating bulge in his abdomen. Gourmand's body goes still and his shrieks become whimpers.
>
> The priest calls into the rafters for the lights, his hands flailing wildly. Gourmand's abdomen bursts open, and a deformed, froglike creature with an oversized mouth of sharp fangs rises out of it. The creature reaches into the corpse of Gourmand and tears the heart from his chest. The creature then turns to face the screaming audience and swallows the organ whole.
>
> As the spotlight falls on it, the creature rips up a floorboard and slithers under the stage. Everyone runs. You rise up out of your seat to watch the moon flicker and go dark. Four of the villagers' discarded torches blandly illuminate the recesses of the stage. The buildings surrounding the alley lose



their decorative facades and turn into lightweight, wooden scaffolds. There is no clear way to get to the stage, except to charge through the frenzied crowd.

Fighting the Slaad

Gourmand was Kieran Mists. He used *hallucinatory terrain* and *spectral force* spells to enhance the stage decor, but these spells fail with his passing. Kieran refused to let his sickness prevent him from acting in his plays. Kieran's magical disguise is revealed if his body is inspected. (He used *change self* spells to hide his identity.)

The PCs must brave the fleeing crowd to reach the stage area. The shock of witnessing the events on stage and the commotion in the theater make it impossible to attack the slaad with missile weapons or ranged spells before it flees into the hole. PCs require 3 rounds and a successful Wisdom check to get to the stage. Each failed check adds 1d2 rounds, as the PC blunders into an impassable crowd of people. Once the PCs are on stage, they can enlarge the hole made by the slaad (which expends 1 round) and descend through it, or they can go backstage and descend the stairs. It is a 10' drop to the floor of the basement area if PCs go down the hole. PCs suffer no damage from the fall if they take adequate precautions.

The baby red slaad is immature but feeds relentlessly on the vermin and other inhabitants of the theater basement. The PCs have 1 turn (10 rounds) to find the slaad before its regenerative powers transform it into a young slaad. When the PCs find the slaad, it is sitting at the position marked "**X**" on the basement map, eating rats. The slaad resembles a tadpole; it has a translucent tail and shriveled hind feet. It pulls itself along using its forearms. It will not flee from combat unless a bright light is shined on it. The PCs can fight from the tops of the boxes and crates that fill the basement, adding +1 to their attack rolls and improving their Armor Class by 2. The baby slaad is an adept climber, but because its hind section is underdeveloped, it has difficulty attacking PCs standing above it. It is driven by its appetite and follows a PC who taunts it with food. The baby slaad cannot *gate*, use its stunning croak, or impregnate foes. It has not been alive long enough to gain these abilities.

Red slaad, baby: AC 6; MV 12; HD 4+3; hp 22; THACO 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1–2/1–2/2–8; SA surprises opponents on a 1–5 on 1d10; SD thief abilities (see below), regenerates 1 hp/round; MR 10%; SZ M (4' long); ML 10; INT low (5); AL CN; XP 420; *MM*/318 (modified) and *DUNGEON Adventures* #43.

The baby red slaad has the following thief abilities: MS 55%, HS 60%, DN 60%, CW 85%.

After 1 turn, the baby slaad transforms into a young slaad and acquires new statistics. PCs witnessing the 1-round transformation must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or be unable to act during the round because of the revulsion caused by the slaad's molting process. The baby's pink flesh darkens to red, its tail becomes a stub, and its rear legs become stronger. The young slaad moves on all fours and is more clumsy.

The transformation process does not heal wounds suffered by the slaad in its baby form. The DM will note that the

young slaad can kill low-level characters with a single bite. DMs are advised to administer damage from the bite in a dramatic fashion and not kill PCs outright. Leaving a PC dangling with two hit points left is a far more effective method of creating tension during combat.

Red slaad, young: AC 5; MV 9; HD 5+3; hp 36 (at full); THACO 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1–3/1–3/2–12; SD thief abilities, regenerates 2 hp/round; MR 20%; SZ M (6' tall); ML 10; INT low (6); AL CN; XP 650; *MM*/318 (modified) and *DUNGEON Adventures* #43.

The young red slaad has the following thief abilities: MS 35%, HS 30%, DN 40%, CW 50%.

Concluding the Adventure

When the city watch arrives on the scene, the PCs should have just finished the combat. After a brief interrogation, they are escorted from the theater. A couple of days later, the watch contacts the PCs and arranges to give them the possessions of Kieran Mists, who had no next of kin. The PCs receive a *wand of misplaced objects* with 50 charges, a *ring of chameleon power*, a *buckle knife +1*, and Kieran Mists' traveling spellbook with the following spells: *change self, conjure spell component, scatterspray, ventriloquism, blur, improved phantasmal force, sense shifting, Lorleveim's creeping shadow, spectral force, watery double,* and *hallucinatory terrain*. The DM may substitute other items as he or she sees fit. The PCs should not receive the spellbook if there is no mage in the party, as it is worth too much money.

The city closes the Midnight Theater for a time and reopens it just in time for the festival season, but it never fares as well as when Kieran ran the show. Maybe some business-minded PCs could do a better job, and there is always the chance that the original owner of the *ensnarement* spell comes to the city looking for its whereabouts.

PCs searching among the props and costumes in the basement might find the manuscript for a lost play titled *The Pirate King*, which tells the story of the pirate Bloody Rupert and Katiana, the noblewoman who captures his heart. Hidden in the pages of this manuscript is a treasure map. The map could pinpoint the location of a pirate hoard somewhere in the city, or it could be a false map. Either way, the lost play and the map are excellent hooks for future adventures.

Clever DMs can use the events at the Midnight Theater as the basis for a city-based campaign. Perhaps one of the people attending the play is a nobleman in need of brave heroes. The manner in which the PCs handle the slaad might encourage this NPC to approach them with a job offer. Perhaps the noble is being threatened by the local thieves' guild, or perhaps the noble wants the PCs to gather incriminating evidence on a sinister rival. The possibilities for intrigue and adventure are endless. Ω

Oliver writes: "Some say there's nothing better than dinner, a few pints of ale, and a show. A tip to the hat to those adventurers who unwind with a night on the town before reaching for their spellbooks and weapons."

Coming in Issue #78

Cover by Brian Despain

"Lear the Giant-King"
by Mike Selinker.
An AD&D® adventure,
levels 9–11.

"The Winter Tapestry"
by Stephen C. Klauk.
An AD&D adventure,
levels 5–8.

"Deepstrike"
by James Wyatt.
An ALTERNITY® STAR*DRIVE®
adventure, levels 6–8.

"Peer Amid the Waters"
by Johnathan M. Richards.
An AD&D adventure,
levels 1–2.

"Veiled Threats"
by Peter R. Hopkins.
An AD&D Side Trek,
levels 4–6.

Our Special Thanks To This Issue's Playtesters!

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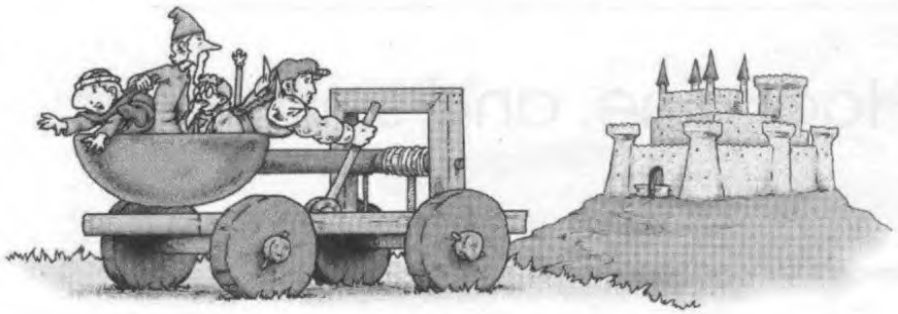


TO WALK BENEATH THE WAVES

BY W. JASON PECK

Hook, line, and sinker

Artwork & Cartography by Stephen Daniele

Jason would like to dedicate this adventure to his sister, Marjorie, and all her friends who don't believe he exists. Jason's previous work includes "Wild in the Streets" (Issue #62) and "Priestly Secrets" (Issue #71).

"To Walk Beneath the Waves" is an AD&D® adventure designed for 4–8 characters of levels 3–5 (about 24 total levels). The party should include a variety of character classes with at least two warriors and two spellcasters (either mage or priest, and preferably both). PCs with ocean-going skills will be especially useful.

Although it might be helpful for the PCs to have access to spells such as *water breathing*, they should possess very few if any magical items that help them deal with the undersea element. Items for traversing the world beneath the waves are provided in the adventure, and by limiting the amount of such magic, the DM enhances the sense of mystery and wonder inherent to this environment. In addition, if the PCs have too much control while underwater, many of the encounters they might face will be much less challenging. However, PCs must have some sort of magical light available to them. (If not, the DM might have to supply one.)

The adventure begins in the town of Rawnis along the northeast coast of Keoland in the GREYHAWK® setting, although much of the action takes place in the local coastal waters. Little of the town is detailed here, and the DM is free to detail it as he or she sees fit. Rawnis is a small fishing town with a population of just over a thousand, virtually all human. For those interested, Rawnis is located forty leagues northeast of Saltmarsh, the primary location of the classic "U series" modules. Those with access to these modules may wish to use them as inspiration for preparing the town. These adventures are not needed to run this adventure, however.

Although this module can be played using only the *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide* and the *Player's Handbook*, it is highly recommended that the DM make use of the game supplements *Of Ships and the Sea* and *The Sea Devils*. These sourcebooks contain invaluable information for enhancing underwater adventures.

For the Dungeon Master

The hot summer months are just coming to a close in the small town of Rawnis, and the cool autumn breezes are beginning to waft in from the sea. The past few months have been relatively calm, and the townsfolk have grown accustomed to the tranquillity. But the Keoland coast is a wild place set on the edge of the civilized lands. The people here know that civilization and safety extend only as far as the town walls, and even then, only with constant vigilance. Already, the fishermen have begun to whisper that something more sinister lurks beneath the waves.

Someone or something has been stalking the town at night, especially near the docks. The incidents began innocently enough, with only minor vandalism committed against several of the fishing boats and docks. However, over the last few days, several fisherfolk have gone missing, the vandalism has increased, and many fishing boats have been sunk. In addition, the fishermen are grumbling that fishing has gone sour, and it is widely believed that the sea devils have come to haunt the town.

Lord Stenwill, the First Councilor of the town, has little experience in such matters. Sahuagin have not raided this coastline in over a hundred years, and he knows only fables or vague stories. These tales, however, attest to the brutality and savagery of these devils of the deep. Even if there are no sahuagin lurking about, something is going on, and Lord Stenwill means to stop it. He recently decided to consult with the only man in Rawnis with knowledge of the sahuagin: Nelzim the Sorcerer.

Nelzim analyzed the evidence and concluded that the town was being raided by sea-dwelling creatures. Since sahuagin are known throughout the seas of the Flanaess as brutal coastal raiders, he assumed it was them. In addition, Nelzim was aware that sahuagin had attacked the Keoland coast in the past, as early as last decade if the rumors from the south were true. Unfortunately, Nelzim's knowledge of sahuagin ended there, and all sourcebooks in his library were vague, adding little more than the fables the Council had heard. However, based on the sahuagin reputation for preying on the weak, Nelzim urged the Council to take immediate action against the sahuagin raiding party to demonstrate that this coastline was not a weak target, ripe for plundering.

Nelzim provided the town council with the magical equipment necessary to carry the battle to the sea devils, having planned to salvage a sunken ship in the near future anyway. Being a practical man, the sorcerer sees the possibility to complete a task of his own while performing a service for Rawnis at the same time. Having volunteered his equipment, Nelzim informed the Council that the depths of the ocean were no place for an old wizard to go traipsing about. Instead, they needed to find a team of adventurers to brave the depths and destroy the sahuagin raiders. The First Councilor assured the sorcerer that none of the town's militia could manage such a dangerous task. Fortunately, he had heard of a group of powerful adventurers that were currently in town.

Unknown to all, there are no sahuagin raiders. The recent depredations have been caused by a predatory band of kuo-toa. See "The Kuo-toa" sidebar for more details.

Beginning the Adventure

What follows is one scenario the DM may use to lure PCs into this adventure. If the DM is using this module as part of an ongoing campaign set in Rawnis (perhaps in conjunction with the classic "U series" of adventures), then the PCs might be familiar with many of the individuals involved in this story. Indeed, the PCs may be residents of Rawnis. In this case, the DM might wish to arrange a more specific hook into the adventure.

> The hot days of summer are beginning to slip into the cooler months of fall. The warm sea breezes are gone, replaced with chilly gusts and dark clouds. Several fishing boats move across the gray river water, the fishermen clad in heavy raincoats with their heads bowed against the harsh sea breeze. A storm is brewing, but that is the least of the town's concerns. Something foul is afoot. There have been several acts of vandalism against fishing boats and the docks in the last few days. There are whispers that more than one fisherman has gone missing. Many frightened citizens believe that the sea devils have come calling.
>
> As you stand looking at the river, hankering for a mid-day meal and perhaps a mug of warm cider, a group of guards walks past. One is a town crier and he shouts hoarsely into the wind. "All heed! Brave men needed to serve the Town Council! Who among you is bold enough to face the sea devils to earn their reward? Step up and strike a blow for Rawnis!" The rest of his words are lost in the murmur of the wind as the guards begin to move away. As the last of the guards moves past, he glances your way and nods.

If the PCs express any interest in the matter, they can choose to catch up with the guards or seek out any town official. In either case, they are brought to Nelzim's home to meet with the First Councilor and the sorcerer. The PCs are given an escort to Nelzim's home, but the guards are tight-lipped, responding to all questions with a gruff "You'll be briefed by the First Councilor when we get there."

If the PCs go along, the DM should read or paraphrase the following:

> You are escorted to a large, well-maintained home of simple design. As you walk up the porch steps, the front door opens and a guard waves you in. Thunder rolls across the sky as the last of your group files into the foyer.
>
> Once inside, you are led through a side door and into a makeshift meeting hall. Several mismatched chairs have been assembled before a long table with two individuals seated behind it. The people behind the table are seated unusually far apart. To your right is a man in his thirties with long brown locks tied back. The guards refer to him as First Councilor. The person to your left is an old man with white hair and a beard. He is clad in a dull blue robe with frayed cuffs. His bent frame is draped in his chair.

After a moment of silence, the Councilor leans forward and clears his throat. "Right. We have little time, so I'll get right to the point. Using magic provided by the sorcerer Nelzim here, we wish for your group to enter the local sea and find and destroy the camp of the sahuagin that have been raiding our town. You leave in two hours. Any questions?"

The First Councilor is direct. Nelzim has convinced him that they must act swiftly if they are to stop the sahuagin from alerting their people that this coast is weakly defended. Clearly, First Councilor Stenwill has a low opinion of adventurers, seeing them as little more than expensive mercenaries. However, he is practical and knows they are tools that the Council must employ on occasion. He wastes no time, immediately launching into the negotiation. The other members of the Council are currently preparing the town's defenses, so the First Councilor is authorized to speak for the other four members in this matter.

Stenwill offers 3,000 gp for successfully destroying the sahuagin raiding party. Naturally, the Council requires some proof, such as the right hand of each slain sahuagin. Stenwill can be negotiated up to 5,000 gp.

If the PCs express any hesitation, the First Councilor attempts to bait them by pointing out the fact that they are adventurers and that this is surely the sort of challenge that drew them to this coast in the first place.

Nelzim says nothing while the PCs are negotiating with the First Councilor. As soon as the matter is settled, or sooner if the Councilor fails to convince the PCs to accept the mission, Nelzim surprises Lord Stenwill by offering further incentive. He tells the PCs that he is willing to pay them an additional 5,000 gp if they can retrieve a brass bound sea chest from a sunken ship that lies somewhere in the local waters. If the PCs seem interested, Nelzim tells them only that the chest is the property of an "associate" of his and that it was lost some years ago while in transit to that personage.

At any rate, the First Councilor allows this distraction to continue for only a few moments before breaking in. He glares at the sorcerer before reminding everyone of the true reason for undertaking this mission. He informs the PCs that he has no objections to them hunting for the sorcerer's sunken treasure, as long as they do so after they deal with the sahuagin. He takes great pains to emphasize to everyone that Rawnis's survival is at stake. Once he is satisfied that everyone understands this, he excuses himself, telling the PCs that there is some urgent business he must attend to before the adventurers depart. He informs them that he will return within the hour; in the meantime, Nelzim can familiarize them with the gear they will be using on their mission.

Gearing Up

Nelzim has assembled quite an array of magical equipment for his planned expedition to salvage the shipwreck. Though impressive, the equipment is not without its drawbacks. Nelzim explains each item in turn, briefly covering the benefits and limitations of each. He takes care to stress that while these items allow the PCs to travel beneath the waves, their opponents still have the advantage. Despite the magical equipment, the PCs are land-dwellers and must use their wits. Once he has explained each item and given his warning, he entertains any specific questions the PCs might have.

The equipment is as follows:

- Three potions of *water breathing*, two with four doses and one with two doses. Each dose lasts 1 hour + 1d10 rounds.
- A *ring of clumsiness* with a secondary power of *water breathing*. The water breathing power can be activated three times a day and acts as the spell (as if cast by a 12th-level wizard).
- A *helm of underwater action*.
- Five suits of *Drawmij's undersea apparatus*. See the "New Magical Item" sidebar on the next page for details.

Into the Depths

After the PCs have had a short time to question Nelzim concerning the undersea equipment, First Councilor Stenwill returns with a squad of guards. The Councilor and his men accompany the PCs to the river docks. During the brief walk to the docks, Stenwill explains that he believes it is best if the PCs enter the river at the dock and then follow it into the sea, pointing out that virtually all the recent problems have occurred in and around the river and its docks. The Council has concluded that the sahuagin are using the river as a highway into Rawnis and thus, this is the place most likely to contain clues to their whereabouts.

The sea where much of this adventure takes place is a shallow continental shelf that runs along the coast. This region of the sea is a relatively narrow plain of gently sloping ocean floor extending two miles from the shores of Keoland's coast. Beyond this shelf, the sea floor drops to an unknown depth. The shelf's waters vary in depth, averaging about 60 feet, but never more than 80 feet. It is recommended that the DM use one or more random encounters from the above table to challenge the PCs and provide atmosphere for their undersea journey.

The waters here are clear unless otherwise noted in the text, but due to the overcast conditions, vision is limited to a distance of 40 feet. Unless the PCs manage to convince the First Councilor to allow them more time, they should be entering the river sometime around 10:00 or 11:00 A.M. This gives them roughly 7–8 hours of daylight to conduct their search for the sahuagin camp. Despite the seemingly vast expanse of sea, the PCs need only search the relatively small region that comprises the local continental shelf. This, coupled with the fact that there are several clues to steer them in the right direction, should allow the PCs to locate and confront the real menaces residing in the sea before the sun sets. Of course, the DM should not inform the PCs of this. Instead, the PCs should be allowed to feel daunted by this seemingly impossible task.

DMs should consult the *DMG* or *Of Ships and the Sea* accessory for rules governing underwater movement, visibility, hearing, spellcasting, and combat. The "Quick Water Rules" sidebar on page 67 provides a brief overview of the pertinent rules.

The following encounters are keyed

New Magical Item

Drawmij's undersea apparatus

Each of these suits consists of a glass bowl that fits over the wearer's head. The bowl has a small brass tube that connects to a huge seashell worn on the back. The shell is strapped to an elaborate, fishskin harness.

Each suit provides the immersed wearer with 24 hours of breathable air. After this time period, the suit is drained and must be recharged before it can be used again. The recharging process is achieved via an intense magical ritual requiring an air elemental.

Drawmij's undersea apparatus allows its wearer to breathe underwater (or in any unbreathable environment for that matter) but provides no other advantages. Each suit weighs 60 lbs. and can prove tiring without the buoyancy of water. Because of a suit's weight, any PC with less than 15 Strength cannot swim while wearing one. Even PCs with 15+ Strength can swim at only half their normal rate. The suits impose no movement penalties on PCs walking underwater.

Characters wearing an *apparatus* can speak normally and can therefore cast spells with verbal components (provided that the spell does not require other individuals to hear the words spoken by the caster). Sounds uttered by those wearing an *apparatus* do not carry beyond the glass bowl. PCs wearing the suits who hold their helmets directly against one another can communicate normally, however.

Despite the magical properties of each *apparatus*, the suits are quite fragile. The glass bowl can withstand 10 points of direct damage before shattering. (A *shatter* spell destroys the bowl instantly and inflicts 1–6 points of damage to the suit's wearer.) The shell portion of the apparatus is somewhat more resilient and can withstand up to 24 points of damage. The brass tube between the shell and glass dome is fragile and can only withstand 3 points of damage. Striking any part of the *apparatus* is treated as a called shot (–4 attack penalty) against AC 10, modified by the wearer's Dexterity bonus, shield bonus (frontal attacks only), and magical protections (if any). The *apparatus* provides no adjustment to the wearer's AC, nor can it be worn over armor heavier than chainmail (magical or nonmagical).

XP Value: 2,500 **GP Value:** 10,000

to the undersea map. In addition to the keyed encounters, DMs should check for random encounters every hour, with a 1-in-8 chance of an encounter occurring.

1. Rawnis River Mouth.

The riverbed gently rolls downward into the sea. The slow-moving water becomes murky, with dense clouds of silt swirling about and obscuring everything beyond five feet. As you move down the slope and into the sea, everything disappears except a featureless slope of deep, soft sand with the occasional shadow dancing in the clouds at the periphery of your vision.

One of the fleeting shadows that dances just beyond the PCs' vision is actually a shark. This creature is plainly visible at a distance of 20 feet and swims 15 feet above the sea floor. The shark does not attack, however, unless it is attacked first. Instead, the shark shadows the PCs as they move deeper into the sea, circling them at a distance of 20-100 feet. This ominous shadow should make the PCs nervous. If any PC should become wounded and bleed, the shark is 50% likely to attack the bleeding individual each round that the blood loss continues unabated. In addition, three more sharks (see the "Undersea Encounter Table" for details) patrol the local waters; if any blood is shed while the PCs are in the local sea (except in area 7), there is a 60% chance that these sharks arrive in 3–12 rounds. These additional sharks behave just like the first shark.

The area of the sea directly around the river mouth is cloaked in a dense cloud of roiling silt stirred up by the river's current as it washes into the ocean here. This cloud extends out from the river mouth for a distance of roughly 200 feet. This distance encompasses the entire alluvial fan of the Rawnis River. Once beyond this point, the water returns to its clear state. On the southern side of the alluvial fan, just at its base at a depth of about 25 feet, the shattered remains of a recently sunken fishing boat lie half-buried in the sand. Adventurers who search the nearby vicinity for at least 1 turn find several other discarded objects. These include a metal bucket, a knife, the shredded remains of a fishing net and one long boot. These items lie dropped in a pattern that moves roughly in a southeastern direction, and all were obviously dropped recently. These objects were cast aside by the kuo-toa, who have used this area as a reassembling point after each of their raids.

Shark: AC 6: MV swim 24; HD 6; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2–8; SZ L (8' long); ML 10; INT non (0); AL N; XP 270; *MM*/117.

2. The Shimmering Doom.

As you move across a large expanse of sandy sea-bottom, a large school of brilliant blue and yellow fish appears from the east. The school swims slowly toward you, coming as close as 40 feet before turning sharply to the north and

Undersea Encounter Table

Roll 1d8 and consult the table below:

1. Sharks (3): AC 6; MV swim 24; HD 4; hp 26, 17, 12; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2–5; SZ M (5'+ long); ML 10; INT non (0); AL N; XP 120; *MM*/117.

These creatures behave much like the shark encountered at area **1**. In fact, if the PCs are not bleeding, these sharks begin to shadow them. Should the PCs be attacked by something else that causes bloodshed, the sharks become frenzied and attack.

2. Kuo-toa Patrol. This patrol consists of Hlundoop and her three warriors. Despite Glupooluk's belief in the invincibility of the kuo-toan war party, Hlundoop still leads her warriors to occasionally patrol the local waters. Due to the superiority of kuo-toan senses (especially underwater), the kuo-toa almost certainly see the PCs long before they see the kuo-toa. If this is the case, Hlundoop leads her patrol in a hit-and-run strike to appraise the PCs' strength. The kuo-toa strike from the most advantageous direction (imposing a –3 penalty to the PCs' surprise rolls) and fight for only 1–2 rounds before withdrawing. Using their superior swimming speed, they return to area **7** to prepare a suitable defense. In this case, there is no chance of surprising the kuo-toa.

In addition, Hlundoop uses what she learned in her brief skirmish with the PCs, preparing the kuo-toan warriors to prey on any apparent weaknesses in the PC party. PCs who have been identified as spellcasters will be targeted first, for example.

3. Fish School. A large school of colorful and exotic fish swims lazily across the PCs' path. These innocuous creatures move as a large cloud, swishing this way and that. The local waters teem with scintillating colors, especially yellows, reds, and bright blues. Though seemingly oblivious to most dangers, such as sharks or the PCs, the fish are startled easily by sudden movement. Their frenzy lasts only briefly, and the school returns to its meandering nature in 1–3 rounds.

4. Manta ray: AC 6; MV swim 18; HD 8; hp 32; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3–12 or 2–20; SZ L (20'+ wingspan); ML 13; INT non (0); AL N; XP 3,000; *MM*/117.

This massive ray is not aggressive but may seem very ominous as it glides out of the gloom and swims low over the PCs' heads. Should they leave the manta alone, it soon disappears back into the dark waters. If the PCs molest the creature, however, it turns sharply and swims rapidly away, lashing one PC with its long stinger tail (Dmg 2–20) as it departs.

5. Swirling Currents. Swirling currents of water buffet the PCs for 1–3 turns, slowing all movement by one-third. In addition, the currents kick up sand and silt along the bottom, reducing the visibility range of all creatures within 30 feet of the sea floor to 15 feet.

6. Giant octopus: AC 7; MV 3, swim 12; HD 8; hp 40; THAC0 13; #AT 7; Dmg 1–4 (×6)/2–12; SA constrict for 2–8 points of damage/round; SD ink cloud, camouflage; SZ L (10' diameter); ML 13; INT animal (1); AL N; XP 2,000; *MM*/271.

This horrible beast comes from the nearby depths of the oceanic abyss. When first encountered, the giant octopus is lying motionless near a rocky outcropping or amid a large kelp bed. Due to its color changing ability, it is only 10% noticeable when camouflaged. It attacks swiftly, however, once the PCs come within 20 feet. The PCs should roll for surprise as normal.

7. Whalesong. The PCs detect strange squealing sounds coming from somewhere far off. These sounds continue for several minutes (2–8 rounds). The sounds originate from a pod of whales several miles away. This encounter serves only as a haunting prop to enhance this otherworldly environment.

8. Giant lampreys (2): AC 6; MV swim 9; HD 5; hp 28, 17; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1–6; SA blood drain for 10 points of damage/round; SZ M (6'+ long); ML 9; INT non (0); AL N; XP 270; *MM*/117.

These mean-spirited, leechlike eels swim directly up to the PCs and attack. Once a lamprey has successfully bitten a PC, it latches on to suck its victim's blood. On the following and subsequent rounds, the giant lamprey drains 10 hp of blood each round, until it has sucked its equivalent hit points in blood. Until it has drained its fill in blood, the lamprey will not release its victim unless slain. Any encounter with these creatures when sharks are nearby is almost certain to work the sharks into a frenzy. However, since sharks often feed on giant lampreys in these local waters, they are just as likely to attack the lampreys as they are the PCs (especially if the lampreys are wounded and bleeding).

idly swimming away. As the fish move across your path, the whole group shimmers and sparkles briefly.

These exotic but ordinary fish have inadvertently given the PCs a warning. The fish did not actually shimmer or sparkle; rather, they passed by a large pod of near-invisible jellyfish that float directly in the PCs' path approximately 20 feet ahead. Unless the PCs adjust their course, they must make a successful surprise check with a –1 penalty or blunder right into the jellyfish pod; each PC is attacked by 1–2 jellyfish. Due to their near invisibility, the jellyfish impose a –2 penalty to attack rolls against them.

Jellyfish (18): AC 9; MV swim 6; HD ½; hp 2 each; THAC0 20; #AT 2–4; Dmg nil; SA venomous tentacles inflict 1 point of damage; gains free attacks against any creature that inflicts damage on it in a melee attack (even if the damage was enough to kill it) as it reflexively lashes out with its tentacles; SD near invisibility (opponents suffer a –2 attack penalty); SZ S (1' diameter); ML 20; INT non (0); AL N; XP 7; *OSS*/119 (modified).

3. The Light Among the Weeds.

As you approach a large undersea forest of towering seaweed, you glimpse a bobbing light moving through the fronds. At first the light appeared to be some sort of reflection, but as you continue to watch, the light's movement slows. For an instant it hovers motionless amid the waving vines of the kelp forest, only to suddenly begin bobbing once more. The globe of light swirls about in long, lazy motions amid the weeds, almost as if dancing, before beginning to recede once more into the forest.

The bobbing globe of light is a haunt, the restless spirit of a locathah warrior who was supposed to be watching for approaching enemies. Unfortunately, he let himself be distracted when he spotted a rare fish. Abandoning his post to hunt the trophy fish, the locathah warrior failed to warn the castle of an imminent sahuagin attack and was surprised and killed by the attacking scouts amid this kelp forest.

The haunt attempts to lure the PCs into the kelp forest before launching an attack. This haunt's domain encompasses the entire forest, a region roughly 300 yards × 600 yards and extending within 10 feet of the water's surface. In actuality, the haunt can attack victims within 5 feet of the kelp forest, but it prefers to wait until victims are within the kelp where escape is not so easy. Due to the dense growth, movement in the kelp is reduced by half for any corporeal being that enters.

Those who enter the kelp forest are subject to attack by the haunt, who selects a random victim and attacks until destroyed, the victim is possessed, or the victim escapes. The bobbing light shadows PCs who attempt to swim over the kelp forest until they are lured into the forest or pass beyond it. Those of evil alignment who are possessed by the haunt are subject to strangulation attacks as the haunt attempts to kill them using their own hands. If, however, the possessed victim's alignment is compatible with the haunt's (neutral or good), the ancient locathah warrior attempts to use its new host to accomplish its original task: warning the locathah castle. The possessed victim ignores all others, swims to a spot near the forest's center, and digs up a large spiraled horn made from green coral (worth 1,000 gp). The victim then proceeds southeast to the old, ruined locathah castle (area 7). Once within 100 yards, the possessed character attempts to blow the horn (which might prove dangerous if the PC cannot breathe underwater). If this is successful, the haunt's spirit is permanently laid to rest. Unfortunately, it also means that the kuo-toa in the ruins are alerted to the PCs' presence.

Haunt: AC 0 (or victim's AC); MV 6 (or as victim); HD 5; hp 27 (or victim's hp); THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA drain 2 points of Dexterity by touch (victims whose Dexterity is drained to zero are possessed, and any victim of evil alignment so possessed will begin strangling him- or herself in following rounds, suffering 1 point of damage on the first round, 2 on the second, 4 on the third, and so on, doubling each round until the victim is dead or the haunt is driven off); SD struck only by silver or magical weapons in its natural state (weapons inflict 1 point of damage plus the magical bonus, if any); *hold person* causes the haunt to make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or be ejected from the victim's body; *dispel good* destroys the haunt forever; SZ S (2' diameter globe); ML 16; INT non (0); AL NG; XP 2,000; *MM*/186.

Quick Water Rules

Quick Water Rules are rough interpretations of the in-depth rules explained in *The Sea Devils* and *Of Ships and the Sea*. These rules are for land-adapted PCs only and assume no magical prevention to breathing, vision, or magical prevention of water resistance during combat (such as items conferring *free action*).

Hold breath, prepared: ⅓ Constitution in rounds.
Hold breath, encumbered and/or exerting self: ⅙ Constitution in rounds.
Hold breath, exerting and unprepared: 1/12 Constitution in rounds (minimum 1 round).

* * *

Swim, proficient & unencumbered: ¼ land movement.
Swim, proficient & encumbered: ⅙ land movement.
Swim, nonproficient & unencumbered: ⅙ land movement.
Swim, nonproficient & encumbered: sink like a stone!
Walking (along the ocean bottom): ⅓ land movement times 5 in yards per round.
DM's Note: These figures detail underwater swimming rates. Surface swimming occurs at the rates given in Chapter 14: Time & Movement in the *Player's Handbook*.

* * *

Underwater vision, clear water, day: Approximately 60–80 feet; half this distance for every additional 50 feet descended.
Underwater vision, turbid water, day: Approximately 40–60 feet; half this distance for every additional 50 feet descended.
Underwater vision, clear or turbid water, night: It's dark!
Infravision: ¼ normal; images beyond this range are smeared past recognizability.

* * *

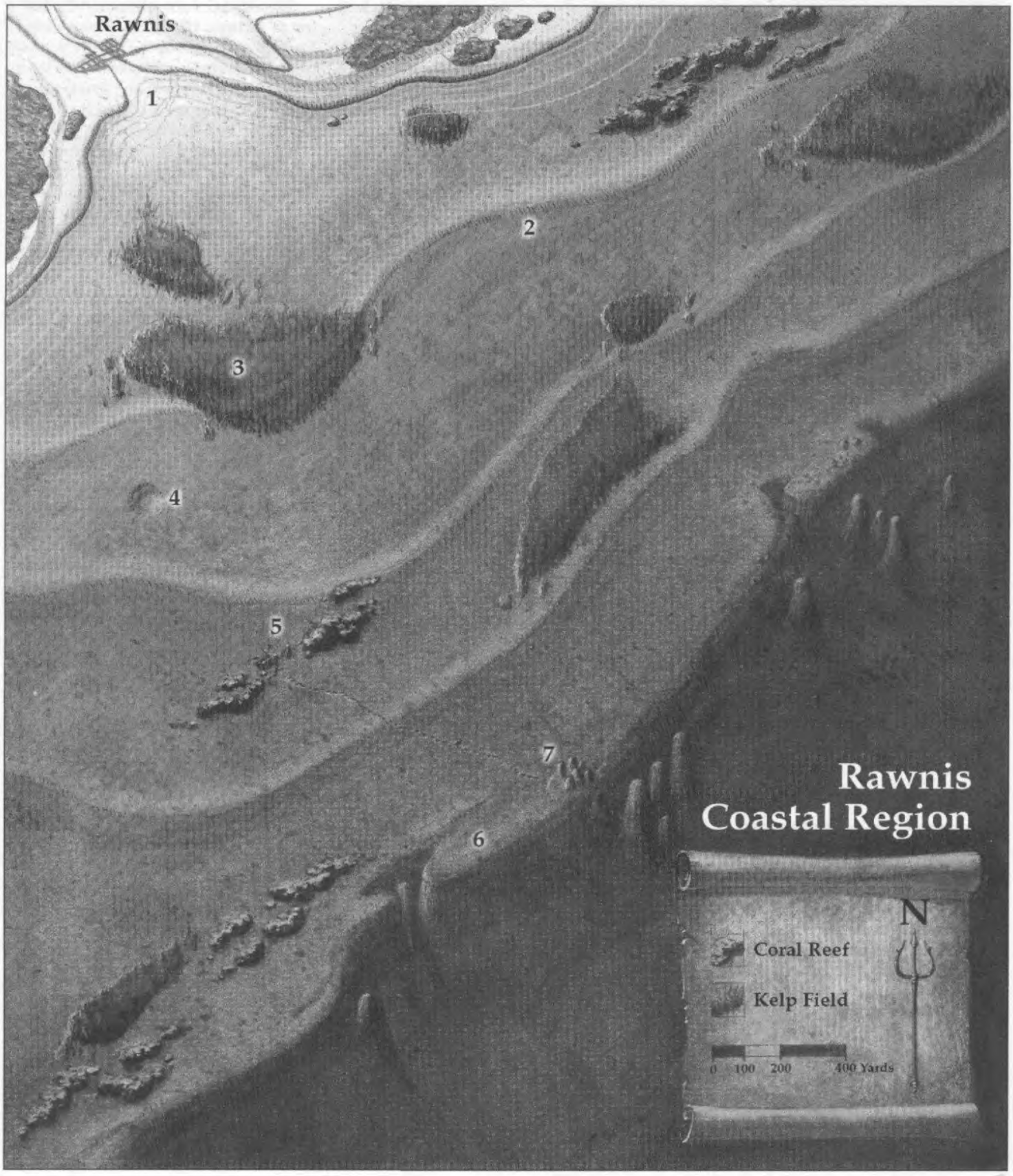
Underwater hearing, complex messages: 10' range.
Underwater hearing, simple shouts: 60' range.

* * *

Underwater melee: Only thrusting attacks are effective. PCs suffer a –4 penalty to initiative, and all attacks suffer a –4 penalty to hit. Additionally, all weapon specialization effects are nullified. At the DM's discretion, some weapons wielded by land-dwellers inflict reduced damage (as described in *Of Ships and the Sea*).
Underwater missiles: Thrown weapons are ineffective; crossbows and similar weapons operate at 1/10 normal range.

* * *

Underwater spellcasting, verbal components: Impossible to properly articulate sounds underwater while *water breathing*; spells or items such as *airy water, underwater action*, or *free action* are necessary. As an optional rule, kindly DMs might allow a character to cast a spell using air stored in the lungs, but this depletes the held breath in a single round.
Underwater spellcasting, material components: Many material components are ruined by water; DM's discretion required (or refer to detailed rules in *Of Ships and the Sea*).


Rawnis
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
Rawnis
Coastal Region
N
Coral Reef
Kelp Field
0 100 200 400 Yards

4. Tears of the Moon.

After traveling over a seemingly endless expanse of rolling sand, the monotony of the sands gives way to a huge, bowl-shaped crater with gently sloping sides. The whole region is lit by a strange, pale light that appears to emanate from a large, round object at the center of the crater.

As you move closer, the round object shimmers with a soft silvery light, looking more like a huge, polished shield lying on its side. These fleeting images quickly fade as you scrutinize the phenomenon more closely. The silver object appears to be some sort of pool of liquid that resists mixing with the sea. The whole pool cannot be more than ten feet across, and its placid surface is broken only by the head and shoulders of a monstrous fish-man statue. This pitted statue appears to be carved from some reddish stone and juts from the pool in an askew manner.

This strange magical liquid is called lusangwus, a word roughly translated from the language of the sea elves as "Tears of the Moon." It is extremely rare and considered holy by the aquatic elves. In the hands of those elves it serves as holy water, but it also has a few properties that make it valuable to alchemists and others.

Lusangwus is a viscous fluid heavier than water and does not mix with any known liquid. It constantly emanates a soft light comparable to that of the full moon. Using lusangwus in a spell or potion that harnesses the power or light of the moon increases its effectiveness by 200%. Unfortunately, lusangwus is also treated as a Type J poison, which makes its use in potions risky.

Lusangwus is worth about 1,000 gp per gallon to alchemists or interested spellcasters. The sea elves consider it sacrilege to barter this holy liquid and demand that any such liquid be turned over to them immediately. Refusal is met with hostility.

The pool contains roughly 22 gallons of the magical liquid. PCs must be clever, however, to bring back any substantial amount from this undersea environment due to the difficulties of gathering lusangwus while underwater. One possible method includes opening an airtight, air-filled container while submerging it in the lusangwus pool.

The statue is a worthless relic from the same locathah civilization that once held sway in the sea here and that built the castle to the southeast (area 7). Only the head and shoulders, depicting an ancient locathah king, remain of the shattered statue. The remainder has long since been buried beneath the sand.

5. Shipwreck.

As you head deeper into the open sea, a large shadow coalesces out of the gloom ahead. The broken remains of a sunken ship lie twisted across a formation of large boulders on the ocean floor. Here and there, wisps of green or orange seaweed sprout from the ship's planks, softly swaying in the currents.

Here lie the remnants of the ship that was lost at sea while carrying Nelzim's sea chest. Unfortunately, the chest is no longer here. The chest and its contents were looted by the kuo-toa when they arrived. In fact, other than the abundance of fish and similar undersea life living here, nothing of any value can be found in the wreck. However, those who make an exhaustive search of the wreck and its vicinity find a faint trail in the sandy bottom nearby. This trail leads away to the east and was left by the giant crab that dwells outside the locathah ruins. (The giant crab comes to the shipwreck every few days to hunt prey.)

6. The Edge.

The sandy sea bottom comes to an abrupt end here. An undersea precipice stretches into the distance on your left and right, and before you yawns a dark abyss. The steep cliff is composed of jagged boulders with an occasional sandy ledge. Beyond, the waters spiral away into a vast space of blue-black.

Although the cliff is not vertical, the vast open spaces of the ocean beyond do make it appear that way. The depth of the ocean drops more than a thousand feet beyond the vast precipice, which extends for miles along this coast in both directions. The depths beyond this precipice are beyond the scope of this adventure. DMs wishing to continue undersea adventures after this module may expand upon these deeper regions.

7. Stronghold of the Kuo-toa.

A huge coral formation squats on the sea floor amid the gloom. It is large, as wide as two ship lengths and at least 60 feet tall. As you approach, the blue-green coral formation begins to show signs of an artificial nature. Despite the jagged projections jutting from the coral, the walls are too rounded and sheer to be natural. As you draw nearer, the unmistakable glint of metal can be discerned blocking an entranceway of some sort. Further up the wall, several narrow fissures can be seen—far too uniformly placed to be anything but window slits. It seems you have discovered the fortress of some undersea civilization.

This undersea castle is ancient, built long ago by the locathah. The locathah have long since vanished, but the site still possesses an almost haunting aura. The ruins now serve as the temporary lair of the kuo-toan raiding party responsible for Rawnis's recent troubles. (See "The Kuo-toa" sidebar for more details.)

As the PCs draw within 20 feet of the castle, they notice several features that suggest that the place hasn't been well maintained and is partially ruined. The walls are pitted, with seaweed growing all along their lengths. In addition, the walls have collapsed in several spots, with large chunks of coral having fallen in heaps. Other than the tracks left by the giant crab mentioned in area 5, there is no indication of life anywhere around the structure. Indeed, were it not for the features mentioned in the description above, the entire structure would appear as little more than a large coral outcropping half buried in the sand.

When the PCs first approach the castle, there is a 30% chance that Hlundoop and her three warriors are off hunting in the surrounding waters. If so, they return

in 2–8 turns. Either way, the kuo-toa feel that these local waters are fairly secure, and thus there is only a 20% chance that they see the PCs approach through one of the window slits on the upper floor. If the PCs are taking care to conceal their approach, the DM should reduce the kuo-toa's chance of spotting them.

The interior of the castle is relatively calm, aside from the occasional cross-current. Virtually every room has a layer of silt (2–5 inches thick) built up on the floor. The domed ceilings are all 25' high, allowing plenty of space for aquatic creatures to swim about. Unless otherwise noted, all rooms are dark and devoid of life. PCs without infravision require some sort of magical light source to see inside the ruins.

7A. Courtyard.

> Enclosing a oddly shaped courtyard are four crumbling coral towers. Scattered about the sandy floor of the courtyard are small piles of broken coral. The largest of these, a boulder-sized chunk, lies partially buried near the court's center. The rounded archway leading into the castle is 12 feet wide and at least 15 feet high. Thick metal bars, orange with rust, block the portal. However, two of the central bars have been bent apart, leaving room for a large man to enter.

The boulder-sized chunk of coral is a giant crab whose carapace is similarly colored to the coral of the castle. The crab treats the courtyard as its lair and is currently resting after its last hunt. (The tracks from area **5** lead straight into the courtyard and directly to the crab). If the PCs make no loud noises and remain at least 5 feet from it at all times, the crab will not rouse itself for 2–12 rounds. If these conditions are violated, however, the giant crab lurches to the attack. The kuo-toa avoid the crab by swimming out of her reach and entering the portal far too fast for her to react. The crab is too big to enter the breach in the bars.

Giant crab: AC 3; MV 9; HD 3; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 2–8/2–8; SD –3 penalty to opponents surprise rolls: SZ L (10' diameter); ML 13; INT non (0); AL N; XP 65; *MM*/50.

7B. Entrance Hall.

> The walls of this once grandiose chamber are now cracked and covered with seaweed. The occasional fresco can be glimpsed behind the swaying kelp. Even more captivating is the huge, circular patch of purple-stalked weeds that dominates the floor. The 1' high weeds are densely packed and, like the seaweed clinging to the walls, sway gently in the current.

The chamber is a nexus, with five circular archways set at regular intervals along the walls. A circular shaft opens in the center of the domed ceiling above. Muted light streams from this shaft.

None of the plant life in this chamber is dangerous. The swaying is caused by the various water currents that run through this part of the castle. The purple sea stalks growing up from the floor are rubbery and tough. The stalks are edible, and the entire patch radiates a mild magical dweomer. The weeds were originally intended to serve as a food source for the inhabitants of the castle. They have been treated with an enchantment that causes the stalks to regenerate themselves to their current height after a period of 12 hours.

The brightly colored frescoes on the walls depict locathah performing various activities, such as hunting, harvesting kelp, swimming, and so forth.

Although this room is not inherently dangerous, it serves as the main ambush site for the kuo-toa. If the PCs have been detected (spotted approaching the castle or overheard fighting the giant crab in area **7A**), the kuo-toan raiders are ready and waiting when they enter here. The kuo-toa station themselves outside the hall, just beyond the archways: Glupooluk waits in area **7G** above, Woomuleop in area **7E**, Hlundoop and two of the warriors loyal to her in area **7D**, and the remaining three warriors in areas **7C** (one in each chamber). Once all of the PCs have entered the nexus, Glupooluk gives the signal to attack (a high pitched squeal). Woomuleop, both warriors armed with pincher staves, and one of the warriors armed with a spear rush the PCs from all sides. Meanwhile, Glupooluk enters the chamber from above and floats 20 feet overhead, casting his spells. (He has already cast *protection from good* on himself). The kuo-toa attempt to subdue the PCs in this initial attack. (See "The Kuo-toa" sidebar for individual kuo-toan tactics.)

Hlundoop and her two warriors do not join the fray immediately. Instead they wait, hoping that Glupooluk is slain or at least seriously injured in the fight. If they believe the battle will end quickly, Hlundoop and her warriors attack. Otherwise, Hlundoop and her warriors take 3 rounds to circle around through areas **7E** and **7I** and enter through the ceiling entrance. If Glupooluk still lives and is wounded, Hlundoop's first action is to strike down the priest with one blow. If the blow slays Glupooluk or misses altogether, then the battle carries on as normal. If the blow strikes the priest but he is not killed, the two factions of the kuo-toan war party immediately attack one another (assuming they can disengage from their air-breathing opponents). This infighting lasts until either Glupooluk or Hlundoop is slain or until the PCs make themselves too dangerous to ignore. Once the rivalry between Glupooluk and Hlundoop is settled, the kuo-toa resume their attack on the PCs.

Glupooluk, Woomuleop, and those warriors loyal to the priest fight to the bitter end, preferring to subdue opponents if possible. Hlundoop and the warriors loyal to her fight viciously until it is clear the battle has been lost, at which time they flee. They strike to kill and give no quarter, expecting none in return.

7C. Sleeping Chambers.

> A stone slab carved with shell-like patterns rests in the center of this large, round chamber, and a smaller, featureless slab is pushed against one wall. Here and there, the occasional shrub protrudes from the silt collected on the floor. Dangling from the ceiling are two tattered nets covered with greenish-black moss. A few small fish swim among these decrepit hammocks.

These three chambers are virtually identical. The centrally located slabs are, in fact, tables upon which locathah once

placed their weapons and apparel. The smaller table held tools and other small every day items. No such items remain, however. The only exception is a shark tooth knife encrusted with coral decorations (worth 75 gp) that lies buried in the silt of the westernmost chamber.

The locathah used hammocks that are actually large nets secured to small, rusted metal rings in the ceiling. There are enough rings for six hammocks per room, but only two hammocks remain in each chamber, and they fall apart when handled.

The northeastern chamber contains a secret door leading outside. The door consists of a small (3' diameter) slab that rolls aside with slight pressure.

Unless the kuo-toa have prepared an ambush (see area **7B**), these chambers are all unoccupied.

7D. Training Chamber. This tower seems to be split into two separate sections. The immediate portion of the chamber is separated from the rear of the tower by a zigzagging wall. A rounded archway pierces this wall in one corner.

> This room contains only one object of interest: a large weapon rack constructed from the long, yellowing bones of some monstrous sea creature. Three decrepit spears and a circular shield made from a tortoise shell hang from the rack.

This tower serves as the quarters for Hlundoop and her three warriors. If the kuo-toa have not prepared an ambush and Hlundoop and her warriors are not out hunting, Hlundoop and two of the warriors are sleeping in the rear section of the tower while one warrior stands guard in the forward section. Other than the kuo-toa, the rear section of the tower is devoid of contents.

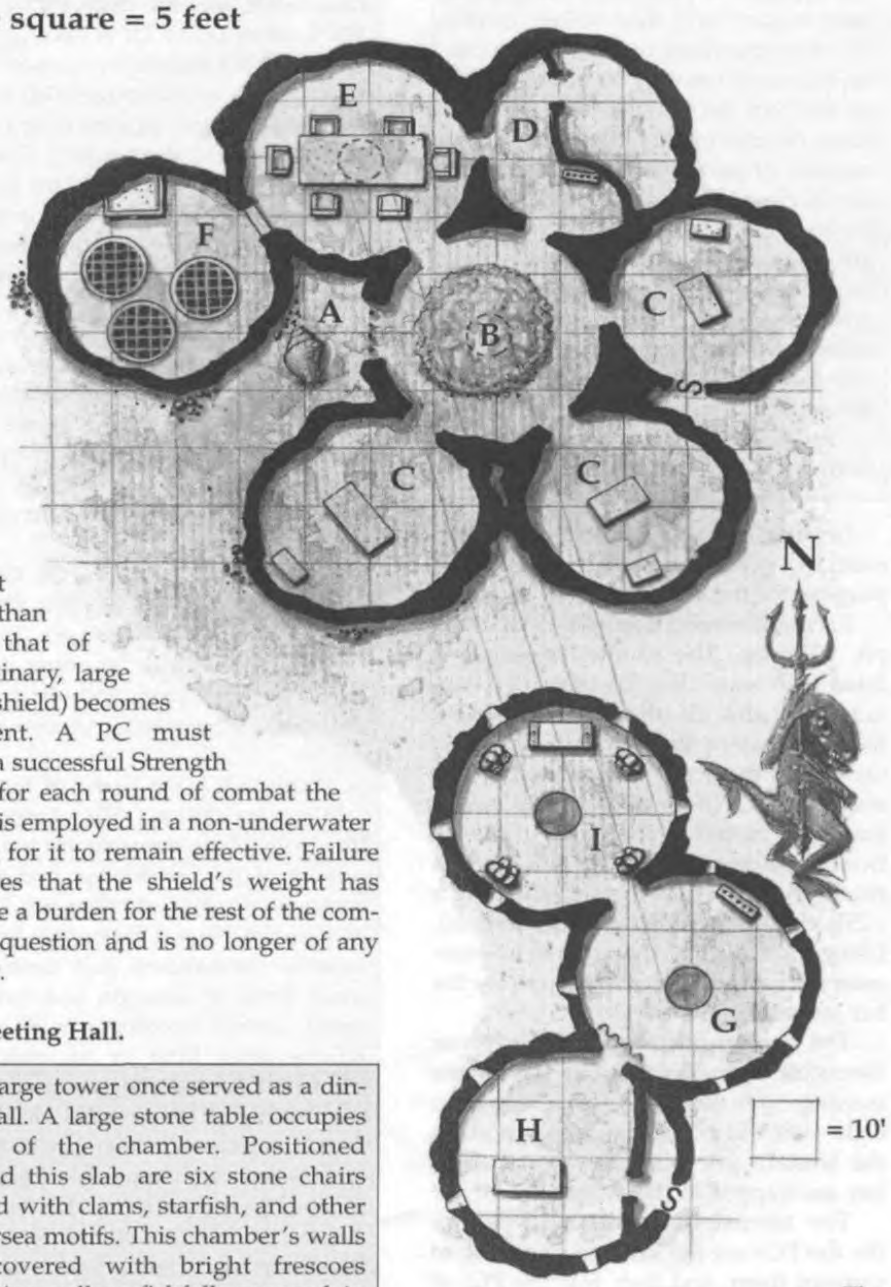
The weapon rack is quite solid, despite its appearance. The three spears, on the other hand, are brittle and must make a saving throw vs. crushing blow if handled in any fashion. (Even if they survive such treatment, they crumble if actually used to strike a blow.) The tortoise shell is, in fact, a large *shield +1*. Unfortunately, if the *shield* is removed from an underwater environment, its true weight (more than twice that of an ordinary, large metal shield) becomes apparent. A PC must make a successful Strength check for each round of combat the shield is employed in a non-underwater setting for it to remain effective. Failure indicates that the shield's weight has become a burden for the rest of the combat in question and is no longer of any benefit.

7E. Meeting Hall.

> This large tower once served as a dining hall. A large stone table occupies most of the chamber. Positioned around this slab are six stone chairs carved with clams, starfish, and other undersea motifs. This chamber's walls are covered with bright frescoes depicting yellow fishfolk engaged in various activities. The largest scene depicts a host of the fishmen in a titanic battle against dozens of sharks. This scene begins along the upper reaches of the walls and spills onto the domed ceiling. In the center of the ceiling is a gigantic shark, its maw opened wide. A circular shaft opens to the upper story of the castle through the shark's mouth.

The Stronghold (Area 7)

One square = 5 feet



The frescoes, though impressive, have no special properties. Other than the stone table and its surrounding chairs mentioned above, the only other feature of note is a metal door set into the southwestern wall. The door is actually a large sheet of metal with an eel-shaped handle set into it. The door opens by sliding it into the southeastern wall.

7F. Dungeon.

The chamber beyond the sliding metal door is dark and foreboding. Unlike the other chambers in this strange castle, this room has very little silt built up on the floor. Set into the floor are three large, circular metal grills. Each is constructed of dark, rusty iron. The grills are all closed and secured by a simple bar through a metal loop. Beyond the grillwork you can see nothing but murky blackness. In addition to the grills, the room contains a huge slab of stone set into the northern wall. This slab measures ten feet tall and five feet across, and it is set into the wall.

You hear a muffled whine coming from the pits below the grills.

In their day, the locathah used this room as a prison. Now, it serves the same purpose for the kuo-toa.

Each grill covers a simple stone-lined pit, 10' deep. The southernmost pit is filled with water, but the other two contain breathable air (thanks to an ancient dweomer cast by the locathah). The air in each pit is magically replenished by the same magic. Unfortunately, the spells that once protected the metal grillwork from the elements are now fading. As a result, the grills have rusted (allowing a +25% chance to all Bend Bars attempts). Using force against the grills is not necessary; it is a simple matter to remove the bar restraining the trapdoor.

The two air-filled pits contain seven townsfolk from Rawnis who have gone missing (four men, two women, and an eight-year old boy). The men are all in the western pit, while the women and boy are trapped in the eastern pit.

The townsfolk mistakingly believe the the PCs are the kuo-toa returning to torment them, and they fear the PCs at first. However, once they learn that the PCs are friendly, they beg to be rescued. They readily explain how the "evil fishmen" abducted them, forced a foul elixir (*Elasmobranchuvor*) down their throats that allowed them to breathe water, and brought them here. Currently, these prisoners have no ability to breathe water and cannot hold their breath long enough to reach the surface. If the PCs somehow rescue these helpless villagers,

The Kuo-toa

Glupooluk, kuo-toa male P4/T4: AC 4; MV 9, swim 18; hp 21; THAC0 17; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 2–5 and/or by weapon +1; SA +1 to attack and damage with weapon due to 17 Strength; fighting with a dagger only, kuo-toa can also bite for 2–5 points of damage; SD surprised only on a 1; slippery skin (only 25% chance of grappling, grasping, tying, or holding with *web* spells); immune to poison, paralysis, illusions, and spells affecting only humanoids; spot moving invisible objects; 60' infravision; sense vibrations up to 10 yards distance; half damage or none from electrical attacks if saving throw is successful; *magic missiles* inflict only 1 point of damage per hit; SZ M (6' tall); ML 13; INT high (13); AL NE (chaotic tendencies); XP 650; *MM*/215.

Thieving skills: PP 20%, OL 15%, FRT 25%, MS 50%, HS 45%, DN 20%, CW 75%, RL 20%, backstab (×2 damage).

Priest spells (3/2): 1st—*curse, darkness, protection from good*; 2nd—*hold person, water devil* (the watery version of *dust devil*).

Glupooluk is the leader of this slave-raiding expedition. His devotion to Blibdoolpoolp is complete. He is a fanatic servant of the Sea Mother and sees all events as displays of either her favor or displeasure. He and his kuo-toa followers recently encountered and destroyed a small band of sahuagin and have executed several successful raids against Rawnis with little or no opposition. Glupooluk has become convinced that the Sea Mother is viewing his deeds with favor. Unfortunately, as is so often the case with his species, Glupooluk is beginning to lose his grip on sanity. His recent triumphs and obsession with Blibdoolpoolp's favor have convinced him that he is invulnerable and that his band should continue their raids upon the weak humans and continue amassing slaves. Hlundoop's warnings of possible human retribution and protests that the kuo-toa lack the means to return home with so many air-breathing slaves have so far failed to penetrate his deluded mind. He is oblivious to the restlessness in his troops and is unaware that Hlundoop plans to slay him.

Glupooluk carries two large pouches on his waist belt. These contain his personal treasures: nine pearls worth 100 gp each, a small jade carving of a lobster head (an unholy symbol of Blibdoolpoolp) worth 60 gp (twice this in XP for its destruction) and 7 cp (Keoland make; trophies taken from slaves). In addition, he wears two leather bracers encrusted with colored coral worth 350 gp for the set. Glupooluk is armed only with a dagger and resorts to its use only after exhausting his spells. He prefers using his spells to capture or incapacitate opponents, hoping to add them to his slave pool—even powerful adventurers who demonstrate no compunction about slaying his own troops.

Hlundoop, kuo-toa female F5: AC 4; MV 9, swim 18; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 2–5 and/or by weapon; SA see Glupooluk above; SD see Glupooluk above; SZ M (7' tall); ML 13; INT high (13); AL LE; XP 270; *MM*/215.

Hlundoop is a proud and respected warrior. She is a soldier foremost and approaches any dilemma from a military standpoint. Although loyal to both her people and her goddess, she leaves social decisions (such as slave taking or surface raiding) to the kuo-toan priests and nobility. In her view, Glupooluk has jeopardized the success of this war party, and his current orders can only lead to the kuo-toa's doom. Therefore, she has determined that he must be destroyed. However, Hlundoop is no fool. She knows she cannot simply slay the priest at present, no matter how tempting it might be. Instead, she has used her influence as a respected warrior to win over half the troops. She is eagerly waiting for a time when Glupooluk, mistaken in his own invulnerability, finds himself in a precarious situation, at which point she will offer no aid to the endangered priest.

Hlundoop wears a necklace of shark teeth trimmed with gold worth 600 gp. She is armed with a wicked harpoon and clad in an elaborate leather harness, with cross-straps across her chest. This harness supports two sheathed daggers and houses the retractable cord attached to her

sidebar continues on next page

sidebar continues from previous page

harpoon. In combat, she wields her harpoon (Dmg 2d6) with two hands, as she is incapable of hurling it while underwater.

Unlike Glupooluk, Hlundoop fights with no restraint, striking to kill. In her estimation, any surface dwellers capable of tracking them beneath the waves are too dangerous to be allowed to live.

Woomuleop, kuo-toa male F3/T3 (whip): AC 4; MV 9, swim 18; hp 15; THAC0 17; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 2–5 and/or by weapon; SA see Glupooluk above; SD see Glupooluk above; SZ M (6' tall); ML 13; INT high (13); AL NE; XP 420; *MM*/215.

Thieving Skills: PP 30%, OL 20%, FRT 15%, MS 40%, HS 35%, DN 15%, CW 70%, RL 10%, backstab (×2 damage).

Woomuleop is a conniving coward. He has always found it prudent to obey both the nobility and priests of his people. His devotion to the ways of the Sea Mother coupled with his gratuitous toadying has earned Woomuleop his current position as Glupooluk's "right-hand man." He is aware that the priest's current decisions are ill advised but fears to oppose the Sea Mother or her servants in any way. However, Woomuleop has also noticed that Hlundoop seems to have no such concerns, and he suspects that she is planning to betray them. Unfortunately, his warnings to Glupooluk have fallen on deaf ears.

Woomuleop is armed with a weighted throwing net, a trident, and a dagger. In combat, he strikes first with his net. (Targets are treated as AC 10, modified by Dexterity and magical protections.) Any PC struck by the net must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or become entangled. PCs require 3 rounds to cut themselves free (this time is reduced by 1 round per helper, to a minimum of 1 round) and can only do so if they have a sword, dagger, or other similarly sized edged implement in hand at the time of entanglement. Once a victim is entangled, Woomuleop attempts to pin the entangled PC to the sea floor by securing the netting with a powerful thrust of his trident. This is automatically successful unless prevented by another PC attacking Woomuleop. PCs secured in this manner require an additional 1–4 rounds to free themselves due to the added constrictions and limitation of movement. After ensnaring a victim, Woomuleop attacks remaining opponents with his dagger and nasty bite.

Warriors, kuo-toa males F2 (5): AC 4 or 3 (with shield); MV 9, swim 18; hp 17, 14, 12, 9, 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 2–5 and/or by weapon +1; SA see Glupooluk above; SD see Glupooluk above, glue-treated shield (25% chance of weapons that attack from the front becoming stuck); SZ M (5' tall); ML 13; INT high (13); AL NE; XP 175; *MM*/215.

Three of these warriors are armed with spears, shields (treated with kuo-toan glue), and daggers. The remaining two warriors are armed with pincher staves and daggers.

The pincher staff is a 5' long pole topped by a 3' long claw. If the user scores a hit (against AC 10, modified by the target's Dexterity and magical protection bonuses), the claw closes upon the victim, making escape impossible. The weapon can only be used on enemies with a girth range between an elf and a gnoll. It is 10% probable that both arms are pinned by the claw and 40% probable that one arm is trapped. If a victim is right handed, the claw traps the left hand 75% of the time. Trapped opponents lose shield and Dexterity bonuses. If the weapon arm is trapped, the victim cannot attack and the Dexterity bonus is lost, but the shield bonus remains.

Although these warriors are essentially all on the same side, their allegiance to the various leaders of this war party is divided. The three spear-wielding warriors have noticed Glupooluk's irrational behavior and have been won over by Hlundoop's martial charisma. They obey her orders first in any battle and do not attempt to take prisoners when fighting the PCs. The two staff-wielding warriors have been awed by Glupooluk's words. They believe he is personally favored by the Sea Mother and are convinced of his invincibility. Following his orders, they attempt to capture all opponents to add to the slave pool. They are unaware that their fellow warriors do not share their devotion.

they should receive an XP bonus. (See "Concluding the Adventure" for details).

The 5' wide, 10' tall stone slab is really a gigantic safe. Closer inspection reveals a 2' × 2' door in the southern face of the slab. This door is locked and trapped with a *glyph of warding* (inflicting 6d4 points of electrical damage to all within a 5' radius, half if a saving throw is successful) placed by Glupooluk using a magical tablet (similar to a scroll). The door has no keyhole and is opened by depressing a tiny section of stone to the left of the panel (detected as a secret door). The door is attached to the bottom of its frame and is spring loaded to slam shut once pressure is removed. Beyond the panel is a 3' × 3' × 3' compartment. The following items are kept in the safe: a small leather pouch containing 23 cp, 14 sp and 4 gp (stolen from the villagers), a slightly damaged 10' × 10' fishing net, a short sword (without sheath), a purple shell roughly the size of a human skull (worth 250 gp), and three black coral vials of *Elasmobranchuvor* stolen from sahuagin. *Elasmobranchuvor* is a foul sahuagin concoction that affects land-dwellers as if it were a potion of *water breathing* with an effective duration of 12 hours. The DM may allow a vial to be split into various doses of lesser duration at his or her discretion. Unfortunately, the concoction is so foul that land-dwellers may only imbibe it with a successful Constitution check (or if forced). In addition, imbibers suffer a –3 penalty to all actions (ability checks, attacks, etc.) while the *water breathing* effect lasts. For more details concerning *Elasmobranchuvor*, consult *The Sea Devils* sourcebook.

7G. Antechamber.

> The upper floor of this tower appears to be a vacant antechamber. Dim illumination streams into the tower via five narrow window slits spaced about the walls. An archway leads to the northwest, and a small tapestry of tiny red seashells covers the southwest wall. The only other feature of note is a large shelf constructed of long, yellow bones. The shelf is bare.

The large shelf is made from the bones of a whale. The shelf is empty but

brittle with age, and any jostling causes it to crumble. The 5' wide × 9' tall tapestry of seashells is worth 5,000 gp intact, but it is both delicate and bulky. The tapestry is difficult to transport without damaging it unless some magical means is employed.

Behind the tapestry is an archway leading to area **7H**.

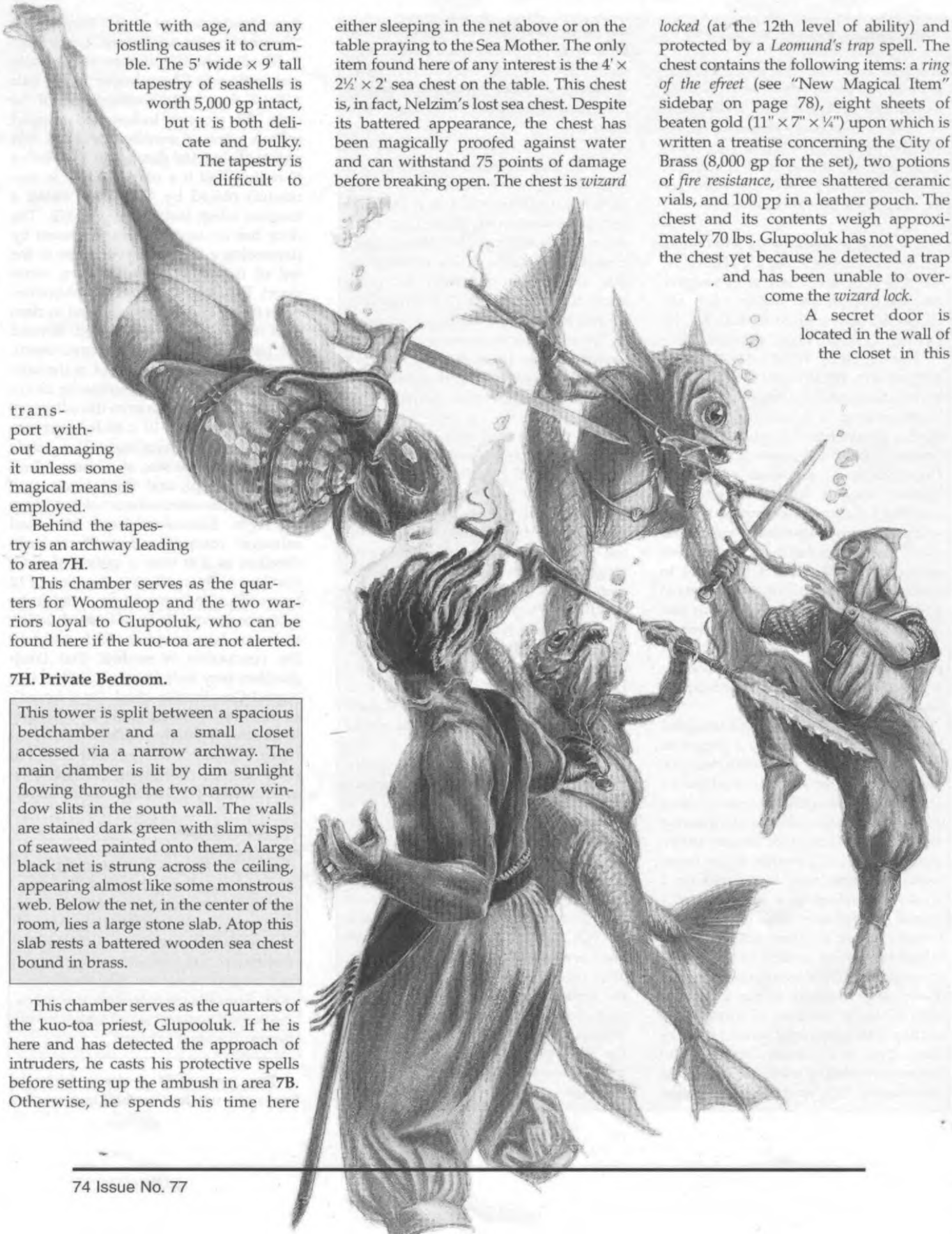
This chamber serves as the quarters for Woomuleop and the two warriors loyal to Glupooluk, who can be found here if the kuo-toa are not alerted.

7H. Private Bedroom.

This tower is split between a spacious bedchamber and a small closet accessed via a narrow archway. The main chamber is lit by dim sunlight flowing through the two narrow window slits in the south wall. The walls are stained dark green with slim wisps of seaweed painted onto them. A large black net is strung across the ceiling, appearing almost like some monstrous web. Below the net, in the center of the room, lies a large stone slab. Atop this slab rests a battered wooden sea chest bound in brass.

This chamber serves as the quarters of the kuo-toa priest, Glupooluk. If he is here and has detected the approach of intruders, he casts his protective spells before setting up the ambush in area **7B**. Otherwise, he spends his time here either sleeping in the net above or on the table praying to the Sea Mother. The only item found here of any interest is the 4' × 2½' × 2' sea chest on the table. This chest is, in fact, Nelzim's lost sea chest. Despite its battered appearance, the chest has been magically proofed against water and can withstand 75 points of damage before breaking open. The chest is *wizard locked* (at the 12th level of ability) and protected by a *Leomund's trap* spell. The chest contains the following items: a *ring of the efreet* (see "New Magical Item" sidebar on page 78), eight sheets of beaten gold (11" × 7" × ¼") upon which is written a treatise concerning the City of Brass (8,000 gp for the set), two potions of *fire resistance*, three shattered ceramic vials, and 100 pp in a leather pouch. The chest and its contents weigh approximately 70 lbs. Glupooluk has not opened the chest yet because he detected a trap and has been unable to overcome the *wizard lock*.

A secret door is located in the wall of the closet in this



chamber. This door is the same in all respects as the secret door found in area **7C**. If taken by surprise and grievously wounded, Glupooluk uses the secret door to escape.

7I. Temple.

> This large domed chamber is well lit, as five window slits allow shafts of dim sunlight to enter. A pale green light emanates from a stone altar resting near the north wall. Four statues of greenish stone stand against the walls of the chamber, forming a square. Each statue is carved in the likeness of a proud fishman with trident held aloft. All four statues face into the center of the room.

This chamber once served as the temple to the now forgotten god of the locathah. The statues are actually set into the floor and are resistant to all forms of attack save *disintegrate, transmute rock to mud,* and *wish* spells. The altar is protected in the same manner.

Closer inspection of the altar reveals that its sides have been carved to resemble a seething mass of fish. The green light emanating from the altar surrounds it to a distance of 5 feet. Anyone not a worshiper of the forgotten locathah deity who enters the light is affected as if by a green *faerie fire* spell for the next 20 rounds.

The kuo-toa find this room distasteful. Their efforts to despoil the temple proved ineffective and resulted only in their being affected by eerie green lights. Ever since, they have shunned the temple, passing through only if they must.

Concluding the Adventure

Once the PCs have completed their mission, they must still return to the surface before their air supply expires. Once free of the sea, they must present their proof of success to the town council, at which point they are given their promised reward. If the PCs mention that their enemies were kuo-toa and not sahuagin, the First Councilor tells them that it makes no difference to him, just as long as the menace has been eliminated. Stenwill curtly thanks the PCs and dismisses them. If they also managed to return with Nelzim's chest, the First Councilor directs them to the sorcerer's house to settle matters with him.

If the PCs manage to rescue some or all of the townspeople from the kuo-toa stronghold, the First Councilor is deeply moved. He softens his attitude toward the PCs and, on the behalf of all Rawnis, thanks them wholeheartedly. In his estimation, the PCs have performed far beyond what was expected or what he personally believed was possible. The Council rewards them with an extra 50 gp (to the group as a whole) per townsperson returned alive and insists that the PCs be honored at a dinner.

If the PCs defeat the kuo-toa, they should receive a 5,000 XP story reward (as a group) plus another 1,000 XP for returning with Nelzim's chest intact. In addition, the PCs should receive 200 XP (as a group) for every townsperson they rescued from the kuo-toa.

PCs who visit Nelzim's home are greeted by the sorcerer at the door. Once he has the chest and its contents, Nelzim gladly pays the promised reward. If the PCs failed to return with the chest, Nelzim may attempt to hire them to retrieve it, but only if the PCs destroyed the kuo-toa. If they failed at their primary objective as well, Nelzim believes that the PCs are out of their league. He thanks them for their bravery but resists any offer to try again. Nelzim is a patient man; he will seek another group of adventurers. No matter what the conclusion, however, Nelzim requests the return of his magical equipment.

On the other hand, if the PCs were successful and express any interest in the

continued on page 78

Nodwick
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by Aaron Williams
FEAR NOT, WE'RE HERE TO SAVE YOU FROM THE KUO-TOA!
THANK HEAVENS!
HOW DID YOU GET DOWN HERE?
WELL, I WAS IN MY BOAT, WHEN THIS HOOK CAME OUT OF THE WATER, BAITED WITH A HAM SANDWICH!
A WHAT?
HOW COULD I RESIST? IT LOOKED SO LEAN!
MINE WAS ROAST BEEF!
I HAD TURKEY!
IF WE RESCUE YOU PEOPLE, DO YOU PROMISE NOT TO REPRODUCE?
IF I COULD'VE FINISHED IT, THIS WHOLE TRIP WOULD'VE BEEN WORTHWHILE!

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special equipment or continuing to explore the world beneath the sea, the sorcerer attempts to sell the equipment to them. These magical items are valuable, but Nelzim is willing to deal. He might trade some of the items in exchange for some rare spell components found only beneath the sea.

Should the PCs gain possession of Nelzim's magical undersea equipment, they may wish to further explore the sea off the coast. Many opportunities for adventure present themselves along this path. What lies beyond the great, undersea precipice? Are there more ruins associated with the ancient locathah civilization? What of the sahuagin that the kuo-toa ambushed; will more sea devils come looking for them? The opportunities are limited only by the DM's imagination. Ω

New Magical Item

Ring of the Efreet

This *ring* appears as an ordinary hoop of smoky brass. A single word is engraved along the inner surface of the ring: "Yasmina." This magical *ring* is unique, although in many ways it is similar to a *ring of djinni summoning*. Anyone who wears the *ring* and speaks the word "Yasmina" summons the female efreeti who is bound to the *ring*. However, unlike a *ring of djinni summoning*, this *ring* does not call Yasmina from her home plane into service. Instead, Yasmina is bound to the *ring* itself, which acts as a receptacle to house her when she is not actively serving. The one who summons Yasmina may ask her to grant three *wishes* or serve for 1,001 days. Like most of her kind, however, she delights in bending the words of her master to cause as much trouble as possible. If her master manages to survive all three *wishes* or the entire 1,001 days of service, the *ring* becomes a nonmagical brass ring until it comes into the possession of someone new.

XP Value: 3,000 **GP Value:** 30,000

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1. Entry: To enter, send your name, address, phone number, and the answers to the question on a postcard to "*Dungeon Adventures* #77 Contest," P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707. No purchase required. You may submit as many postcards as you wish. If you are under 18, you must have your parent's or legal guardian's permission to enter. (A parent's or legal guardian's signature on the postcard is sufficient.) Entries must be received before midnight (Pacific Time), December 1, 1999. The winner will be drawn randomly from the pool of correct entries.

2. Prizes: One winner will receive a free copy of the TSR Silver Anniversary Collector's Edition boxed set (retail value $59.95 US). signed by members of the TSR staff. The winner of the contest will be announced by name in a future issue of the magazine.

3. Eligibility: Void where prohibited by law or restricted by law. The winner will be notified by phone or letter. Employees of TSR, Inc. and Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and their respective affiliates and distributors are not eligible.

4. Restrictions: No substitution of prizes is allowed unless the featured prizes become unavailable. All federal, state, provincial, and local regulations apply. The winner is solely responsible for applicable federal, state, provincial, and local taxes.

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Map of Mystery

Map by Stephen Daniele